

THE
HISTORY
OF
ENGLAND,
IN A
SERIES OF LETTERS

FROM A
NOBLEMAN TO HIS SON,

VOL. II.

*Nec minimum meruere decus, vestigia Græci
Ausu deferere, & celebrare domestica facta.* Hon.

LONDON:

Printed for CARNAN and NEWBERY, at N^o. 69
in St. Paul's Church-Yard.

MDCCCLXX.

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Reprinted from the original MSS. of the
Autograph of the nobleman to his son.

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LETTER XXXIX.

NEVER did Monarch come to the throne of England with a greater variety of favourable concurrences than Charles I. He found himself possessed of a peaceful and flourishing kingdom, his right undisputed by rival claimants, strengthened by an alliance with one of the most powerful Monarchs that ever reigned in France, whose sister he had married; and, to add to all this, loved by his subjects, whom he had won by his virtues and address. However, this was but a flattering prospect; the spirit of liberty was roused, and it was resolved to oppose

4 THE HISTORY OF ENGLAND,

oppose the antient claims of Monarchs, who usurped their power in times of ignorance or danger, altho' they had confirmed it by laws, and continued it by long prescription. Charles had been, from his infancy, taught to consider the royal privileges as sacred pledges, which it was his duty to defend: his father had implanted the doctrines of hereditary and inalienable right early upon his mind. James only defended these doctrines by words, and it was soon the fate of Charles to assert them by action. It is the duty of every Sovereign to consider the genius and disposition of his people, as a father does that of his children, and to adapt his government to each conjuncture. Charles mistook that genius; he wanted to govern a people who had, for some time, learned to be free, by maxims and precedents that had their origin in times of ignorance and slavery.

He therefore began his reign with two of the most difficult projects that could be conceived; the one to succour the protestants in Germany against the Emperor and Duke of Bavaria; the other to keep the royal Prerogatives entire, without a national standing army. In order to effect these purposes, the house of commons was to be managed, who, as I have already described, from being the oppressed party, were now willing, in turn, to become oppressors; who, from a detestation of Popery, had now overshoot the mark, and were become Puritans. His first demand for the necessary supplies to carry on the war of the Palatinate in Germany, though undertaken at their own request, was answered with a petition for punishing Papists, and for an examination into the grievances of the nation. Buckingham, who had been the late King's favourite, and who was still more caressed by the present Monarch, did not escape their censures: so that, instead of grant-

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ing the sums requisite, they employed the time in vain disputations and complaints, till the season for prosecuting the intended campaign was elapsed. The King at length, wearied with their delays, and offended at their contempt of his demands, thought proper to dissolve a parliament which he could not bring to reason. In fact, the commons, at this time, complained of imaginary grievances, but the time was approaching when their complaints were to become real.

The ministers of the King had not yet forgot that kind of tax which was called a benevolence, and which had been often exacted from the subject in former reigns. Charles thought to avail himself of this method of procuring money, but at the same time coloured it over with a greater appearance of justice than any of his predecessors. He therefore determined to borrow money of such persons as were best able to lend, to whom, for this purpose, he directed letters mentioning the sum. With this the people reluctantly complied; it was, in fact, a grievance, though authorised by a thousand precedents; but no precedent can give sanction to injustice. With this money a fleet was equipped and sent against Spain, but it returned without procuring either glory or advantage.

This ineffectual expedition demanded to be repaired by a new supply greater than what extorted loans could produce, and another parliament was called for this purpose. The new Parliament, upon this occasion, seemed even more refractory than the former, and appeared more willing to make or to complain of grievances than to grant money: but chiefly their resentment was directed against Buckingham, the royal favourite. Whenever the subjects attack the royal prerogative, they begin with the

6 THE HISTORY OF ENGLAND.

favourites of the crown; and wise Princes, sensible of this, seldom have any. Charles was not possessed of the art of making a distinction between friends and ministers; whoever was his favourite was always entrusted with the administration of affairs; he loved Buckingham, and undertook to protect him, altho' to defend this nobleman was to share his reproach; two members of the house of commons, Diggs and Elliot, undertook to accuse him. The purport of the charge amounted to little more than that he had engrossed too much power for himself and his relations, and that he had applied a plaister to the late King's side which was supposed to be poisonous. They inveighed against the Duke upon this frivolous accusation, and the King, in a passion, ordered them both to the Tower. This was an open act of violence, and should have been supported, or never performed. The commons exclaimed, that their privileges were infringed; they protested that neither of the members had spoken any thing disrespectful of his Majesty, and began to publish their vindication. The King, who was ever ready to enter upon harsh measures, but not to support them, released the two members, and this compliance confirmed that obstinacy which his former injury had contributed to raise. The Earl of Arundel, for being guilty of the same offence in the house of Lords, was imprisoned and dismissed in the same manner by the King. The two houses having in this manner answered the royal demands for money, the King, rather than give up the Duke, chose to be without the supply, and therefore once more dissolved the parliament.

He had now a war to maintain, which he was engaged in by the advice of those very members who refused to contribute to its support; besides this, he

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was to put the kingdom in a proper posture of defence, and he wanted money to execute these purposes. To furnish the proper supplies he again had recourse to loans, and to granting protections to the Papists, for stipulated sums of money: such as refused had soldiers billeted upon them, contrary to the customs of England; and even some were enrolled for soldiers themselves. Persons of birth and rank were summoned to appear before the council, and, upon their persisting in a refusal, were put into confinement. We now once more perceive the seeds of discord beginning to shoot forth: we now see, as in every other civil war, both parties guilty of injustice, yet on either side that injustice arising from principles of virtue; the one actuated by the inherent liberties of mankind, the other by the prescriptive privileges of the crown: such is the general lot of humanity, to have their actions degenerate from the producing motives.

The King, now finding that nothing but the prospect of immediate danger could induce some future parliament to provide necessary supplies, was resolved, to make a rupture with France, a war *A. D. 1626.* against which had ever been an expedient of producing unanimity at home. With this view he sent out Buckingham with a fleet to relieve Rochelle, a maritime town in that kingdom, which had long enjoyed its privileges independent of the French King, and which he was now actually preparing to deprive them of. This expedition was equally fruitless with that to the coasts of Spain; the Duke knew nothing of the art of war, and consumed his time in besieging a little fort in the isle of Rhee, from whence he was driven with the loss of half his army. The bad success of this served to render the unfortunate Duke still more obnoxious,

8 THE HISTORY OF ENGLAND,

obnoxious, and the King more needy; another Parliament was therefore called, and a supply demanded in the usual form. The commons, in the first parliament, had begun with fictitious grievances, but their refusing then to contribute the supplies soon introduced an actual abuse of power, and rendered the King unjust, who, probably, only desired to be easy. He extorted supplies, and imprisoned the refractory. The complaints of the commons were now real; their members had been imprisoned, loans had been extorted; a tax upon merchandize, called tonnage and poundage, had been exacted without parliamentary authority; and, last of all, the Duke of Buckingham was still suffered to rule the councils of the King, and inflame every proceeding. In this situation they seemed, as usual, resolved to grant no money till their grievances were redressed, and till the King had given a positive assurance to maintain the liberties of the subject. The King promised both, and they voted him a liberal supply, upon which they were prorogued, as was customary. This fresh supply enabled his Majesty to make another attempt to relieve Rochelle, and the Duke of Buckingham was again appointed to the command: Buckingham had ever behaved with some haughtiness, as being secure of the King's protection; but his greatest fault seemed to be too large a share of power, which gave offence to every order. It is the aim of all malecontents in a state rather to bring the great down to their own level, than to exalt the inferior order to theirs: and this might be a motive to the lords and commons for attempting to retrench Buckingham's power. The clamour raised against him in the house was not lost among the people; they re-echoed it from one to the other, and the Duke had a million of foes only from his seeming prosperity.

prosperity. Among this number was one John Felton, an Irishman, a lieutenant in the army; this man was naturally melancholy, courageous, and enthusiastic; he felt for his country as if labouring under a calamity which he thought it in the power of his single arm to remove: he resolved to kill the Duke, and thus to do service both to God and man. Animated with mistaken patriotism and gloomy zeal, he reached Portsmouth, where the Duke was then, surrounded with his levee, giving the necessary orders to embark. Felton came up among the crowd and stabbed him with a long knife to the heart; the Duke instantly fell dead, and Felton *A. D. 1628.* walked composedly away; but his hat had fallen off while he was striking the blow, and this produced the discovery. He disdained denying a murder in which he gloried, and avetred that he looked upon the Duke as an enemy to his country, and, as such, deserved to suffer. We shall see through the course of this reign several instances of great virtues and enormous vices, for the genius of England was at this time arrived at its highest pitch.

The expedition to Rochelle again returned without success, as if it had been ordered by fate that nothing was to put the people into good humour. The contest, therefore, between privilege and prerogative was now carried on with the same acrimony as before. Tonnage and poundage was exacted by the King as a right belonging to the crown, and refused by the merchants as a tax that could only be granted by the people. The parliament was called to determine the dispute; but, instead of discussing that argument, they entered upon disputes about religion. The house was mostly composed of Puritans, and such were for abolishing Episcopacy, and persecuting

Papists.

16 THE HISTORY OF ENGLAND,

Papists. They were freed from Buckingham; but there was another favourite whom they dreaded still more, Laud, Archbishop of Canterbury, a great favourer of the opinion of *Divine right*, and firmly attached to the rites of the church as then established. They seemed willing to allow the King no favourite, and therefore loudly murmured against this Bishop. Their indignation, however, was, for a while, called off to another object, which was considered as a new act of violence in the King. His customhouse officers had seized upon the goods of one or two merchants who refused to pay tonnage and poundage. The Judges, in the former reign of James I. had adjudged this tax to belong to the crown without consent of parliament. The former reign, therefore, had been the proper time for disputing the King's right, but the commons had then not so much power, or such a spirit of resistance as now. They were now perfectly sensible of their own strength, and were resolved to fix the limits between the King and the people. They therefore boldly and warmly remonstrated against the King's proceeding; and he, in return, imprisoned four of the members, and dissolved the parliament. These were the causes which soon after overturned the state, and laid the throne in blood.

LETTER XL.

A Monarchical government has ever been looked upon as best, when wisely administered. We are so constituted by nature that some are born to command, and others to obey. In a republic, how free soever, the people cannot govern themselves, and the leaders must be tyrants over their own

own narrow circle of subjects. In a monarchy the governor is placed at a distance from the many, as he is but one; in a republic the tyrants are near, because they are many. In the former the people are subject to oppression from errors of will; in the latter, they are harrassed by the rigours of the law: in a monarchy the redress of grievances is speedy; in a republic, dilatory and uncertain: in the one, punishments are few; in the other, severe and numerous, from the debility of the constitution.

The present parliament seemed not so intent upon abridging the King's power, as upon entirely abolishing it; they were Calvinists, and it is the spirit of Calvinism to throw off the restraints of royalty. The English had lately seen this happily effected in Switzerland and Holland, and, influenced by such examples, seemed desirous of imitation.

You have seen the King and the English parliament now almost prepared for an open rupture; still, however, the commons kept within the bounds of humble remonstrance, and, while they refused his Majesty's demands, asked pardon for their delay. They had still a respect for their Monarch, which even their republican principles could not entirely efface; and, though they were willing to wound yet they feared to strike an open blow. The Scotch soon set them an example of resistance; they had, in that kingdom, long embraced the Calvinistical doctrines; and, tho' they still had Bishops, these were reduced to poverty, and treated with contempt. James I. attempted to exalt the Bishops, and to introduce the rites and the liturgy of the church of England among them, but died in the midst of his endeavours. Charles, therefore, was resolved to complete what his father had begun. This unnecessary and ill-judged attempt alienated the affec-

tions of his Scotch subjects. The sedition passed from city to city; the Calvinists formed a league, as if all the laws, divine and human, were infringed; while the desire in the court party of supporting their commands, and, in the people, of defending their religion, soon excited, actually, in Scotland, those dangers which in England were, as yet, only apprehended.

In such a situation the King could only repress the presumption of his Scotch subjects by the assistance of those of England; but he had lately dissolved his parliament; and seemed no way disposed to call another; he had cut off the sources of every supply in cases of emergency, and fondly hoped he could govern merely by the terror of royalty. His favourites helped to confirm his errors; they were fond of arbitrary power, because they shared its indulgences; the Privy-Council considered itself as absolute; the Star-Chamber, as it was called, severely punished all who denied the prerogative royal; the High Commission court now turned from defending the Papists against the Puritans, whom they justly feared, as tinctured with the spirit of resistance. The very Judges also, being chosen by the court, were entirely devoted to the King; so that all conspired to lift him above justice, and induced him to call those parliaments no more, whose maxims of government he found diametrically opposite to his own.

He was therefore resolved to fix upon other methods of raising money: methods indeed which were practised by his predecessors, but at times when they had power to control even justice, and force to compel their subjects to obey. Charles, in the midst of a civil war in Scotland, and the discontents of his people at home, at a time when one half of his subjects were preaching sedition, and the other half
were.

were learning to despise Kings; without army, and without treasures; resolved to reign with arbitrary power.

With the taxes which he levied without parliaments in England, he undertook to bring about the reformation in Scotland; and therefore began, as his parliament was now no more, to collect a tax upon the subject called *Ship-money*. This is that famous tax which first roused a whole nation, after an unsettled constitution of more than a thousand years, at length to fix and determine the bounds of their own freedom and the King's prerogative.

To give a sanction to the royal orders, this tax was backed by the opinion of all the Judges, who voted it to be customary and legal. Their opinion will, at once, serve to explain the nature of this tax, and what they judged concerning it. It ran thus, *We every man by himself, and all of us together, have taken into serious consideration the case and question concerning Ship money; and it is our opinion, that when the good and safety of the kingdom in general is concerned, and the Kingdom in danger, that your Majesty may, by writ under the great seal of England, command all your subjects of this your kingdom, at their charge to provide and furnish such number of ships with men, victuals, and ammunition, and for such time as your Majesty shall think fit, for the defence and safety of this Kingdom from such danger and peril: And that, by law, your Majesty may compel the doing thereof, in case of refusal or refractoriness: And we are also of opinion, that in such case your Majesty is the sole judge both of the danger, and when and how the same is to be prevented and avoided, &c.*

An order from the throne thus backed by the opinion of all the Judges, it was thought, would be, at once,

14. THE HISTORY OF ENGLAND,

once, complied with; but the King was deceived. A private man, of courage and integrity, one John Hampden, stood forth as a champion for the people, and refused to pay a tax not authorized by parliament. The sum at which he was rated amounted to but twenty shillings, yet he refused to contribute even this, and brought his cause before the court of Exchequer. Never was a greater cause argued in any court before. The Judges, by their sentence, were to determine whether the nation, and their posterity, were to be subject to arbitrary power, or to enjoy freedom. The judges determined in favour of servitude; Hampden was cast; and this only served to increase the discontents of the people.

The discontent and opposition the King found among his English subjects, one would have thought, might serve to repress his ardour for reformation in the religion of Scotland. Having published an order for reading the liturgy in the principal church in Edinburgh, the people received it with clamours and imprecations; the court-party blamed their obstinacy, as the innovations were trifling; but this was retorted against themselves with still greater force, for labouring so earnestly at the establishment of trifles. The sedition in that kingdom, which had hitherto been secret, was now kept concealed no longer; rebellion had, as it were, set up its standard amongst them. Yet still the King could not resolve to desist from his design; and so prepossessed was he in favour of royal right, that he thought the very name of a King would influence them to return to duty. He was soon undeceived; the Scotch Calvinists, whose principles were republican, entered into a covenant to suppress the Bishops, and resist the King's authority. This was judged an open declaration of war, and
Charles

Charles summoned the nobility of England, who held lands of the crown, to furnish a proper number of forces to suppress them. *A. D. 1638.* To add to his supplies, he demanded a voluntary contribution from the Clergy, and, by means of his Queen, the Catholics also were pressed for their assistance. By these methods he found himself at the head of an undisciplined and reluctant army, amounting to about twenty thousand men, commanded by Generals more willing to negotiate than to fight. However, his superiority of number gave him a manifest advantage over the malecontents, who were not slow in marching to oppose him. Charles had inherited the peaceful disposition of his father; he was unwilling to come to extremities, although a blow, then struck with vigour, might have prevented many of his succeeding misfortunes. Instead of fighting, he entered upon a treaty; a suspension was concluded upon, and terms agreed to, that neither side intended to observe. This suspension, and disbanding the armies, was a fatal step to the King; the Scotch forces could be again mustered at pleasure; the English troops, not without time, difficulty, and expence. Of this the malecontents were sensible, and the negotiations met with obstructions in proportion as they were confident of their power. In short, after much altercation, and many treaties signed, and broken both parties once more resolved upon a war.

War being resolved on, the King now took every method to raise money for maintaining it. *Ship-money* was levied as before; some other arbitrary taxes were exacted with great severity; but one method of increasing supplies reflects immortal honour upon those who granted them. His counsellors and servants lent the King whatever sums they could spare, and distressed

treffed their private fortunes to serve the state. Laud, Archbishop of Canterbury, and the Marquis of Hamilton, contributed very large sums; but particularly Thomas Wentworth, Earl of Strafford, gave his Majesty twenty thousand pounds. Wentworth was one of the great characters that marked those celebrated times. Upon his first appearance in the state, he was foremost in opposition to the crown; but, finding his confederates had mixed a spirit of enthusiasm with their regards for liberty, he left their side to take that of the king, which he fancied in greatest danger. He was brave, wise, and loyal, and followed the King from principle, yet without entirely approving his conduct.

These were the resources of the crown to prepare for a Scotch war, but they were still insufficient; and there was but one method more to furnish larger supplies, namely, by calling a parliament.

A. D. 1640. It was now eleven years since Charles had called any. The ungovernable spirit of the last had taught him to hate and to fear such an assembly. His wants, however, at length induced him to constrain his indignation, and, by the advice of his Council, he called another, the members of which were still more turbulent than the former, as they now had still stronger reasons for their discontent. The house of commons could not be induced to treat the Scotch, who were of the same principles, and contended for the same cause, as their enemies. They looked upon them as friends and brothers, who only rose to teach them to defend their privileges. The King could reap no other fruits, therefore, from this assembly, but murmurings and complaints; every method he had taken to supply himself with money was declared an abuse. Tonnage and poundage, ship-money,

money, the sale of monopolies, the billeting soldiers upon the citizens, were all voted stretches to arbitrary power. The Star-chamber gave particular offence, and instead of subsidies, the house presented the King with nothing but grievances. Charles once more dissolved this parliament, and thus aggravated the discontents of the people.

He had now made enemies of the Scotch nation, and of the commons of England; it remained to offend the city of London; upon their refusing to lend him a sum of money to carry on the war, he sued them in the Star-chamber for some lands in Ireland, and made them pay a considerable fine. He continued to exact all the taxes against which the parliament had so frequently remonstrated; even had he been despotic, such a conduct would have shook him on the throne; but, limited as he was, it served to complete his overthrow. He could expect little assistance from England; and the Scotch, sensible of their own power in that part of his dominions, led an army of twenty thousand men as far as Newcastle upon Tyne, in order to seize upon, or to dethrone him. Having thus prepared his misfortunes, he found himself again obliged to *Nov. 3.* call that parliament, which completed his ruin.

Instead of granting money, this new parliament, as all the rest had done, began by demanding to have their grievances redressed; they desired an abolition of the Star chamber, exclaimed against arbitrary taxes, and particularly ship-money; and, in fine, demanded that a new parliament should be called every three years. Charles was now obliged to grant those demands from necessity, which in the beginning of his reign he might have bestowed as a favour. He expected to regain his authority by complying, but he was deceived; nothing could satisfy the commons

mons but the total abolition of his power. He expected that his English subjects would repress the insolence of those of Scotland, but had the mortification to find the house of commons approve their conduct, and repay their irruption with a reward of three hundred thousand pounds. He hoped to repress the puritanical party in England, but found, to his surprize, almost the whole house of commons of that persuasion. He loved the Earl of Strafford with tenderness, and esteemed his wisdom; and the house of commons, conscious of his regards, accused the Earl of high-treason. When we attempt innovation, we seldom know how far our schemes will extend at last. This parliament began with redressing grievances; they proceeded to reform the state, and ended in totally destroying the constitution.

LETTER XLI.

IN treating of a subject, in which almost every Englishman is partial, it is no easy matter to avoid falling into their errors; but I have laboured to view this part of our history, without receiving any bias from party; and our constitution is now sufficiently established, whatever we may think of this monarch's equity, or his subjects resolution. Our laws, at present, differ both from what Charles endeavoured to maintain, and what his parliaments pretended to enact; we now are all agreed, that unlimited power arrogated on one side, and the tumultuous freedom introduced on the other, are both intolerable; yet, of the two, perhaps, despotism is superior. In a republic, the number of tyrants are uncontrollable, for they can support each other in oppression; in a monarchy there is one object, who,
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if he offends, is easily punishable, because he is but one; the oppressions of a Monarch are generally exerted only in the narrow sphere round him; the oppressions of the governors of a republic, though not so flagrant, are more universal: the Monarch is apt to commit great enormities, but they seldom reach the multitude at humble distance from the throne; the republican Despot oppresses the multitude that lies within the circle of his influence, for he knows them: the Monarch terrifies me with great evils, which I may never feel; the Despot actually loads me with submissions, which I am constantly obliged to sustain; and, in my opinion, it is much better to be in danger of having my head chopped off, with an ax, once in my life, than to have my leg gauled with a continual fetter.

Whatever were the reasonings of the King, upon this subject, it is certain, his actions were intended for the benefit of his subjects; but he continued to rule them, upon the maxims of former princes, at a time when the principles of the subjects were totally changed. The house of commons seemed now to have thrown off all subordination; they not only arraigned and attainted almost all the King's ministers, particularly Laud, Strafford, Finch, and Windebanck; but passed an act to make that parliament continual, until all grievances should be redressed. The King complied with every measure, yet all his compliance only served to increase their demands. The Earl of Strafford first fell a victim to their popular fury: the commons exhibited an accusation of twenty-eight articles against him; the substance of which was, That he had attempted to extend the King's authority at home, and had been guilty of several exactions in Ireland. These received the name of high treason, and the people without de-

manded.

manded justice. The managers for the house of commons pleaded, with vehemence, against him at the bar of the house of Lords, who were his Judges: they insisted, that, though each article separately did not amount to a proof, yet, the whole taken together carried conviction. This is a method of arguing frequently used in the English courts of justice, even to this day; and, perhaps, none can be more erroneous; for almost every falsehood may thus be defended by a multiplicity of weak reasons. In this tumult of aggravation and clamour, the Earl himself, whose parts and wisdom had long been respected and acknowledged, stood unmoved. He defended his innocence with all the presence of mind, judgment, and temper that could be expected from innocence and ability. His little children were placed near him, as he was thus defending his own cause, and that of his master: after he had, with a long and eloquent speech, delivered extempore, confuted the accusation of his enemies, he thus drew to a conclusion: *But, my Lords, I have troubled you too long; longer than I should have done, but, for the sake of those dear pledges, a saint, in heaven, has left me.*—Upon this he paused, dropped a tear, looked upon his children, and then proceeded—*What I forfeit, for myself, is a trifle; that my indiscretions should reach my posterity, wounds me to the heart. Pardon my infirmity.*—*Something I should have added, but am not able; therefore, let it pass.* And now, my Lords, for myself, I have long been taught that the afflictions of this life are overpaid by that eternal weight of glory which awaits the innocent; and so, my Lords, even so, with the utmost tranquillity, I submit myself to your judgment. *Whether that judgment, be life, or death.* TE DEUM LAUDAMUS. His eloquence and innocence seemed to influence his Judges: the King him-
self.

Self went to the house of Lords, and spoke in his defence; but the spirit of the people was excited, and nothing but his blood would give them satisfaction. He was condemned by both houses, and nothing now remained, but for the King to give his consent to the bill of attainder. But his consent seemed of little consequence; the limits of royalty were long since broken down, and imminent dangers might attend his refusal. While he continued in this agitation of mind, not knowing how to behave, he received a letter from the unfortunate nobleman himself, desiring that his life might be made the sacrifice of a mutual agreement between the King and the people; adding, that to a willing mind there could be no injury. This noble instance of generosity was but ill repaid; the King was persuaded to give his consent; he signed the fatal bill; Strafford *A. D. 1641.* was beheaded, and this taught his subjects soon after to spill blood that was still more precious.

The whole kingdom now seemed to be in a ferment; all the petitions of parliament, which were in reality calculated to abase the King, were notwithstanding drawn up in the most seeming affection and obedience; they were constantly complaining in each of these of their fears for the church, at the very time that they were themselves labouring its overthrow. Faction ran high. In the King's party there was an ill-projected and worse conducted design of keeping the prerogative as much untouched as ever it had been in the reigns of the most fortunate and formidable Monarchs; in the opposite party, a fixed resolution of turning the state into a republic, and changing the government of the church into that of presbytery.

In the midst of these troubles, the Papists of Ireland fancied they found a convenient opportunity of throwing off the English yoke. Religion and liberty often inspire the most atrocious actions; and they did to now. The Papists took a resolution, of which we find many horrid examples in history. They attempted to cut off all the Protestants in that kingdom at one blow. Not less than forty thousand persons fell a sacrifice upon this occasion. In such a number of murders, cruelty put on a thousand different shapes; rapes, burnings, and tortures were practised in every part of that miserable island; and all the Protestants perished who had not the good fortune to make early provision for their safety. Such was the state of Ireland then, and such was England shortly to be. The parliament took this opportunity to blacken the King, as if he had given sanction to the Papists, and encouraged their barbarous design; he vindicated himself with a zeal that nothing but innocence could inspire; and tried every method of assisting his Protestant subjects of Ireland. He even demanded succours from the parliament of Scotland to relieve the Irish protestants; but they remitted him to the parliament of England, as Ireland lay more immediately under their protection. The English house of commons sent but feeble succours to a people they pretended to deplore, and gave it as a pretext, that the government at home was in danger.

The parliament now proceeded to what they long laboured at, to establish a republic, and destroy the rites of the church of England. They signified to the King, that it was fit to have a privy-council only of their appointing. Three members of the house of commons presented this request on their knees. The King was pleased to grant all. Oliver Cromwell,

well, who was then in the house of commons, was heard to declare, that if this request was rejected, he would sell his estate, which was then but small, and retire out of the kingdom.

Hitherto, it is probable, both sides were actuated rather by principle than ambition. The bishops had hitherto adhered closely to the King; they were not only expelled the house of Lords, but, upon remonstrating against this unconstitutional measure, were accused by the house of commons of high-treason, and ten of them sent to the Tower. This spirit of epidemic rage was not confined to both houses of parliament alone; the populace daily surrounded the place of sitting, and, with tumultuous cries, demanded justice. The apprentices, the common council, and the citizens of London were foremost in this struggle for liberty, as they thought it. However, their principles were sincere; for the motives of a mob, though often wrong, are always honest. In this contest the Presbyterians, and Cardinal Richelieu of France, were ever intriguing; both desired a civil war, the one willing to depress the great, the other to humble the kingdom.

In this decline of the royal authority, the King was persuaded to take another step that was fatal to his interests. By the advice of Lord Digby, one of his ministers, he went himself to the house of commons, and accused five of its members of high treason. These were the leading members of the house whom he thus ventured to call in question; namely, Lord Kimbolton, Mr. Hollis, Sir Arthur Haslerig, Mr. Pym, Mr. Hampden, and Mr. Strode. He sat, for some time, in the speaker's chair, to see if the accused were present; but they had escaped a few minutes before his entry; and the house of commons was resolved to support the cause. Disappointed, perplexed,

plexed, unknowing whom to rely on, the King went next to the common-council of the city, and made his complaint to them; the common-council only answered by aggravating his former misconduct. From thence he went to Windsor, where, reflecting upon the rashness of his former proceeding, he wrote to the parliament, informing them, *that he desisted from his proceedings against the accused members, and assuring the parliament, that, upon all occasions, he would be as careful of their privileges as of his life or of his crown.* His violence (as a fine writer remarks) had first rendered him hateful to his commons, and his submission now contemptible.

The commons had already stripped the King of almost all his privileges; the power of appointing governors, generals, and levying armies, still remained. They therefore proceeded to petition, that the Tower might be put into their hands; that Hull, Portsmouth, and the fleet, should be commanded by persons of their chusing. These requests were, at first, contested, and then complied with; at last the commons desired to have a militia raised, and governed by such officers and commanders as they should nominate, under pretext of securing them from the Irish Papists, whom they affected to be in dread of. This was depriving the King of even the shadow of his former power; but they had gone too far now to recede, and feared leaving him any power, as knowing themselves the first objects on which its vengeance might be exercised. He was willing to grant the raising a militia, but insisted upon appointing its commanders; the parliament desired to command it for an appointed time; but the King, at last provoked to resentment, cried, that they should not command it, *no not for an hour.* This peremptory refusal broke off all further

treaty, and both sides were now resolved to have recourse to arms.

Charles retired to York, and the Queen went over to Holland, to raise money upon the crown jewels, and provide ammunition and forces. The parliament in the mean time were not idle; they knew their strength and popularity, and published proposals for bringing in money or plate for the defence of the kingdom. But, though each side was prepared for war, yet they took every precaution to lay the blame of the first infraction of peace on each other. The King offered proposals to the commons which he knew they would not accept; and they, in return, offered him nineteen propositions, which, if complied with, would have rendered him entirely subservient to their commands. Their import was, that the privy council, the principal officers of state, the governors of the King's children, forts, castles, fleet, armies, should be all appointed or governed by parliament; that Papists should be punished by their authority; that the church and liturgy should be reformed at their discretion; and that such members as had been displaced for former offences should be restored. These proposals, which, if they had been accepted, would have moulded the government into an aristocratical form, were, happily for posterity, rejected; and the King and his parliament continued to reproach each other for a civil war, of which both were actually guilty.

L E T T E R XLII.

IN this detail of public calamities you are not to expect any great strokes, either in politics or war; each party was too sincere to give much attention

VOL. II.

B

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tention to any thing but the dictates of passion, enthusiasm, or zeal. The parliament was convinced that it drew the sword in defence of liberty; and the King was equally stedfast in believing, that he had the authority of Heaven for opposing their pretensions. They therefore took the field with little conduct; and courage alone in the troops generally decided the fortune of the day.

The parliament, from its own authority, constituted Sir John Hotham, a sitting member of the house of commons, governor of Hull. In this city there was a large magazine of arms, ammunition, and provisions. The King, sensible of the importance of the place, was desirous of securing it to himself; he therefore approached the gates with three hundred horse, and demanded entrance. Hotham still preserved some appearance of respect to his sovereign, and on his knees, refused to admit him. Disloyalty is ever timid in the beginning.

A. D. 1642. Manifestoes, on one side, and the other, were now dispersed through the whole kingdom, and the people were universally divided into two factions, that went by the name of Royalists and Roundheads. The King ordered the Nobility to attend his person; he procured the great seal from London, and erected his standard at Nottingham. The people, in general, seemed to have lost all respect to his person and government; the laws promulgated by parliament, without the sanction of the great seal, were observed with due obedience; and the royal standard was scarce followed by any except a few militia. At length, however, with the succours furnished by the Queen, and the presents of the university of Oxford, and his Clergy, he raised an army of about fourteen thousand men, commanded

manded by Prince Rupert, a man of courage and some experience. The parliament, which disposed of the money of the nation, had one still more numerous, commanded by the Earl of Essex, who fought from principle, and who only wished to bring the King to reason.

When the King advanced from Nottingham, and approached near Shrewsbury, he drew up his little army, and made them a speech: *I promise, said he to the soldiers, in the presence of Almighty God, and as I hope for his blessing and protection, that I will ever defend the Protestant religion, and in that religion am resolved to live and die. The laws of the land, and the rights of my subjects, shall ever be the measure of my government; and, if Heaven prosper this little army, raised for their King's defence, I promise to rule by parliaments alone, and by every equitable administration. When I fail in these particulars, then let me be abandoned of men; and in this resolution I hope for the assistance of all good men, and am confident of the protection of Providence.*

Essex, on the other hand, was resolved to set up his head-quarters at Worcester, and await the King; where, in a few days, a skirmish ensued in favour of the Royalists; and the battle of Edge-hill, fought some time after, seemed to confirm the King's superiority. The Queen had brought him soldiers from Holland, with ammunition and arms, and immediately departed in order to furnish more, yet still the parliament was not discouraged: their demands seemed to increase in proportion to their losses; and, as they were defeated in the field, they grew more haughty in the cabinet. They condemned of high treason such governors of towns as gave up their fortresses to the King; while he, on the contrary, offered new terms of peace upon every advantage. But though

his desire to spare his subjects was laudable, as a man, yet his long negotiations were faulty, as a warrior; he wasted that time in altercation and proposal, which should have been employed in vigorous exertions in the field. Upon the whole, his first campaign seemed to promise him success; his generals were mostly victorious, and his army far superior to the enemy in point of discipline. On the side of the parliament, the great Hampden was slain in the battle of Chaldgrave-field; and on the other hand, on the King's part, the gallant Lord Faulkland was killed at the battle of Newbury. These were the two greatest, bravest, and wisest men of their time, who thus fell, as if, by the kindness of Providence, to prevent their seeing the miseries, and the slaughter in which their country was shortly to be involved.

Hampden was the person who had refused paying ship-money, and withstood the power of the crown; his inflexible integrity gained him the esteem even of his enemies; and his humanity and benevolence, the affection of all that knew him more intimately.

But Faulkland was still a greater character than he. He added to Hampden's severe principles all the politeness and elegance then known in Europe. He had withstood the King, while he saw him making an ill use of his power; but, when he perceived the design of the parliament to change religion, he changed his side, and stedfastly attached himself to the crown. From the beginning of the civil war his natural cheerfulness and vivacity grew clouded, and he became sad, pale, and negligent of his person; the morning of the battle it was seen he desired to die, and he professed that the miseries of his country had already almost broken his heart. He added, that he was weary of the times, and should

leave

leave them before night. He was shot with a musket in the belly, and his body was the next morning found among an heap of slain. His writings, his justice, and his courage, deserved such a death of glory; and they found it. If there be happiness in death, it must be in such an end, falling in battle for our King and our principles.

Each battle served only to weaken the royal party, and to unite the parliament more strongly together; the King and his followers were held together only by secular motives; the parliament had long been actuated by one still stronger, that of religion: this had hitherto been the secret spring of all their commotions, and now they fairly threw by the mask, united themselves to the church of Scotland, and signed the solemn league and covenant, which established Puritanism, and laid the foundation of a new republic. The King, to oppose the designs of the Westminster parliament, called one *A. D.* 1644. at Oxford, where it assembled; and England now saw what it had never before seen, two parliaments sitting at one and the same time. From this partial parliament he received some supplies; after which it was prorogued, and never after convened. The war went on with its usual fury, and skirmishes on both sides were frequent, which served to desolate the kingdom without deciding victory. Each county joined that side to which it was addicted from motives of conviction, interest or fear: while some observed a perfect neutrality. Several frequently petitioned for peace, the wise and the good were most earnest in this cry; but what particularly deserved remark was, the attempt of the women of London, who, to the number of two or three thousand, went in a body to the house of commons, earnestly demanding a peace.

● THE HISTORY OF ENGLAND,

Give us those traitors, said they, that are against peace; give them, that we may tear them in pieces. The guards found some difficulty in quelling this insurrection, and one or two women lost their lives in the fray.

It is both tedious and unimproving to describe all the combats, the battles, the skirmishes, that every day passed on either side. What towns were besieged and taken, how many killed in fight, or what numbers died by the hand of the executioner: every civil war presents the same picture to the imagination; and this was aggravated with all the miseries of rage, resentment, and despair. All were from principle earnestly employed in destroying the constitution; there were few of those refined understandings, who disengaged from the prejudices of party, improved the universal prejudice of the time to acquire dominion for themselves; all were seriously, earnestly, and blindly engaged in the favourite pursuit. The genius of the times was great but irregular.

Among the number who most severely felt the indignation of the commons, was the famous William Laud, Archbishop of Canterbury; he had been imprisoned in the Tower, at the time when nine more of the Bishops were sent there upon remonstrating to the Lords against the severity of the lower house. When he was brought to the bar, in order to make his defence, he spoke several hours with that courage which is the result of innocence and integrity. The Lords, his Judges, were willing to acquit him; but the commons were determined upon his death, and over-ruled all remonstrances made in his favour. When brought to the scaffold, this noble divine, without any apparent terror, made the people a long speech; he told them, " that he had examined his
" heart,

“ heart, and thanked God that he found no sins
 “ there which deserved the death he was going to
 “ suffer. The King had been traduced by some, as
 “ labouring to introduce Popery; but that he be-
 “ lieved him as sound a Protestant as any man in
 “ the kingdom; and as for parliaments, though he
 “ disliked the conduct of one or two, yet he never
 “ designed to change the laws of the country, or
 “ the Protestant religion.” After he had prayed for
 a short space, the executioner did his office at one
 blow. This man seemed born for a better fate and
 better times; but all distinctions of right and wrong
 were now lost in mutual animosity; and in general
 the best characters on both sides were those who fell
 victims to civil fury. He was learned, upright, and
 sincere; humble in his private deportment, but at-
 tached to trifling ceremonies, and ready to lose his
 life rather than give them up.

The liturgy was, by a public act, abolished the
 day he died, as if he had been the only obstacle to
 its former removal. The church of England was
 rendered completely Presbyterian, to the great satis-
 faction of the Scots, and numbers of the citizens of
 London. An ordinance was established, by which
 there should be one day in the week appointed as a
 fast, and the money which was thus spared to the
 family, was to be paid in support of the common
 cause. Thus strengthened, the parliament seemed
 capable of carrying on their designs in an arbitrary
 manner; they had the Scotch to assist them; they
 professed only one religion, and were united by the
 bonds of mutual danger. However, from the mo-
 ment they came to be all ranked under the denomi-
 nation of Presbyterians, they began again to separate
 into new parties, as if divisions were necessary to the
 existence of this parliament; one part of the house

were Presbyterians, strictly so called; the other Independants, a new sect that had lately been introduced, and gained ground surprizingly. The difference between these two sects would hardly be worth mentioning, did not their religious opinions influence their political conduct. The church of England, which was now totally abolished, had appointed Bishops and a book of common prayer; the Presbyterians exclaimed against both; they were for having the church governed by clergymen elected by the people. The independants went still farther, and excluded all clergy; they maintained that every man might pray in public, exhort his audience, and explain the scriptures; but their chief difference lay in acknowledging no subordination in secular employments, and attempting to maintain an ideal equality, to which they justly observed that every man was born. Were such a plan of government practicable, it would no doubt be the most happy; but the wise and powerful must ever govern over ignorance and debility, and the bad success of their schemes, soon after carried into execution, shewed how ill adapted they were to human infirmity. Possessed, however, with an high opinion of their speculative scheme, they behaved with that morose and sullen carriage which is ever the result of narrow manners and solitary thinking. They secretly laboured the abasement of the Presbyterians, yet joined them in their efforts to depress the King.

Charles, now perceiving the parliaments of England and Scotland united against him, and fearing to fall under their united efforts, thought proper to make a truce with the Papists of Ireland, in order to bring over the English troops who served in that kingdom. By this means he not only had many of the English
troops

troops that served there, but also several of the native Irish, who came to increase his army. It was then the parliament complained with truth of his employing Papists in his service, and still farther extended their reproach by saying that he encouraged them to rebel. These troops, however, only served to procure the hatred of his subjects, without strengthening his army. They were totally routed by Fairfax, one of the generals of the parliament army, and slaughtered without mercy after a submission. It was said, that several Irish women were found among the slain, who with long knives did considerable execution; but the animosity of the English against those wretches, at that time, might have given rise to the calumny.

One misfortune now seemed to follow close upon another: Prince Rupert, who had long sustained the honour of the royal arms, was defeated at York, and his army dispersed by Fairfax. Charles had retired to Oxford; his present danger excited his friends to new efforts; he levied new forces, and had some slight success. But this appearance of good fortune did not continue. His army was turbulent and seditious; that of the parliament every day improved in discipline, and obeyed from principle. Among other instances of this nature was that act called the *self-denying ordinance*, by which it was resolved, that no member of the house of commons should have a command in the army. The reasons assigned for this were specious, and perhaps sincere. It was done to prevent the parliament's wishing for the continuance of the war; in order to enjoy a continuing share of authority. The former generals were therefore changed; the Earls of Essex, Denbigh, and Manchester gave up their commissions, and Fairfax, with the assistance

of Cromwell, new-modelled the army without any opposition.

It was the general opinion, that this new alteration would enfeeble the parliament army, but the event proved otherwise: they were, after this, everywhere victorious. Both armies met near Naseby. The King, who commanded the main body of his own troops, shewed himself upon this occasion a courageous general, encouraging his soldiers where giving way, and rallying them in person when broken. The enemy, however, was victorious; wherever Cromwell fought, he brought conquest and terror; and the defeat of the royal army was principally owing to him. This fatal blow the King could never after recover. All his infantry were so scattered that the enemy took as many prisoners as they pleased; his baggage, and the cabinet in which his most secret papers were contained, fell into the hands of his pursuers; and yet, after all, there were not above six hundred men slain upon the field of battle.

It was about this time that Cromwell's courage and genius began to appear; he had hitherto been only a turbulent speaker in the house of commons, and the leader of a regiment in the army. But he now discovered talents greater than his employments, and his present success opened to him the prospects of ambition, which he never after lost sight of. Historians seldom distinguish properly in the changes to be found in the same character; it is probable Cromwell began to act in the state with principles of conviction and sincerity; but, new occurrences arising, his soul was not proof to the allurements of fortune; he gave way to her seducing call. Had he been on the oppressed side, he might have displayed surprizing instances of constancy and integrity;

tegrity; but, happening to be victorious, he became a tyrant and usurper, and bathed his country with royal blood.

Cromwell was possessed of apparent humility and internal pride. This is just the character which Machiavel describes for a successful usurper. He was originally the son of a private gentleman of a moderate fortune, who had some years before attempted leaving the kingdom upon a principle of religion, but was prevented by the King. This religious deportment Cromwell ever inviolably preserved; it secured him an ascendancy in the house of commons, where the majority were enthusiasts: it gained him the affections of Fairfax the general, who was courageous, ignorant, and sincere. It acquired him the love of the army, where his presence was coveted; and he alone was permitted to unite the military and civil employments in his person, for he had a seat in the house while he was a colonel in the field. But he was still resolved farther to strengthen his interests by attaching the Independants privately to his side; they increased in numbers and power by his means, and he, in return, found them resolute and persevering friends.

The battle of Naseby seemed fatal to the interests of the King; and Fairfax and Cromwell availed themselves of the circumstances that offered. Every city that they appeared before capitulated. The young Prince of Wales, afterwards Charles II. participated in the misfortunes of his father, and fled to the island of Scilly. The King drew the shattered remains of his army into Oxford, and once more demanded peace. But, if he could not obtain it in the prosperous state of his affairs, it was not likely that he could now succeed in his desires after a defeat. The house of commons insulted his misfor-

tunes. His letters to the Queen were published, with those ill-natured remarks and railleries which none but the vicious are capable of making. To be at once merry and malicious is the sign of a corrupt heart and mean understanding.

The King, after having taken every measure that he thought could procure peace, without effect, now saw himself shut up in Oxford, a place almost without any fortifications, and every day in danger of falling into the power of a fierce and exasperated party. In such a situation he therefore was obliged to chuse the least of two evils, and to deliver himself up to the Scotch army, rather than the English, as he expected to find less animosity in the former. The Scotch officers had made him some general promises, grounded, probably, upon the hopes of his compliance with every request they should make. He sent them word of his intention to come to their army: and they promised to receive him, and provide for his safety. Upon this precarious assurance the King left Oxford, and, travelling through by-ways and obscure places, arrived at the Scotch army in nine days.

Jan. 30, 1646. From that moment he ceased to be free. The Scotch began to negotiate with the English army, carried their royal prisoner about from one place to another, and, at length, upon consideration of being paid the arrears due for their service in England, which amounted to two hundred thousand pounds, they delivered up their King, and returned home laden with the reproaches of all good men, and the internal conviction of their own baseness. From this period to the usurpation of Cromwell, the constitution was convulsed with all the distractions of guilt and party. When the kingly power was abolished, the parliament then took up the authority; but they were soon

foon to lay it down in turn, and submit to a military democracy; a new form of government, which, like all other democracies, was turbulent, feeble, and bloody.

LETTER XLIII.

THE civil war was now over; and the army of Scotland being paid the reward of perfidy, returned to its country. The parliament had now no enemy to fear, except those very troops which had fought their battles with success. You have already been informed, that this army, by a political stroke of Cromwell, was rendered independent of the parliament, and all its generals disabled from sitting there. The commons therefore were now willing to get rid of it as soon as possible, well knowing that, if the army continued, instead of receiving laws, it would presume to dictate. They therefore passed a vote, by which it was ordained, that a part of it should be disbanded, and another part of it sent over to Ireland. It may easily be imagined that Cromwell would not suffer this. Now was the crisis of his greatness, and he seized the opportunity; he formed a council of officers, and another of common soldiers, called Agitators, who were appointed to enquire into the grievances of the army, and lay them before the parliament. The very same conduct which had formerly passed between the parliament and King was now put in practice between the army and parliament. As the commons granted every request, the army rose in their demands; these accused the army of mutiny and sedition, and those retorted the accusation, by

by alledging a manifest design in the parliament to rule alone.

The King had been confined since he came into the power of the English, at Holmby-castle; the army were resolved to be possessed of his person, and sent one Joyce, a cornet, who from a taylor was become an officer, to take the King by force, and bring him a prisoner to Newmarket. This commission he executed with intrepidity and dispatch. It was in vain that the commons, now without power, complained of this insolence; the army, instead of being awed by their menaces, marched towards London; and now, in turn, prescribed laws to their employers. Cromwell, willing to give all his injustice the appearance of rectitude, caused eleven members of the house of commons to be accused. These were the most powerful and leading speakers, which so astonished the members, that, willing to appease the army at any rate, they writ to the general, that they were ready to receive any particular charge against such as fell under his displeasure.

This was an overture for peace, but pre-eminence was what the army aimed at; instead therefore of being pleased at this condescension, the commander turned their accusation into a general complaint, and tried every method to provoke a quarrel, which the other endeavoured to evade. The citizens of London, at length, opened their eyes; they now saw the constitution effectually destroyed; they saw an oppressive parliament now subjected to a more oppressive army; they perceived their religion abolished, their king a captive, and the people exposed to the worst of slavery.

In this exigence the common-council assembled the militia of the city, the works were manned, and

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a manifesto published, aggravating the hostile intentions of the army. The house of commons was not less divided than the state: one part was for encouraging the citizens to proceed, while the rest, with the two speakers at their head, was for the army. The slightest divisions, in such a situation, are soon attended with violent consequences. The commons separated. The speakers, with sixty-two members, quitted the house to seek protection from the army, while those who remained behind gave orders, and established laws, as if they had power to enforce obedience.

Their assumed power, however, continued but a short time, for the army, with the speakers at their head, soon approached the city. Fear, therefore, compelled the common-council to concur in measures which they tacitly disapproved. They opened their gates to the general, who, attended by the two speakers and the rest of the members, repaired to their respective habitations. The parliament, thus over-awed, gave up the command of the Tower to general Fairfax, and ordered him the thanks of both houses for having disobeyed their commands.

It still remained to dispose of the King, who had been sent prisoner to Hampton-court. The Independants, at the head of whom was Cromwell, and the Presbyterians, in the name of either house, treated separately with him in private; he even had hopes that in these struggles for power he might be chosen mediator in the dispute, and expected that the state, at last, sensible of the miseries of anarchy, like a froward child, hushed by its own importunities, would settle under its former tranquil constitution. But he was soon undeceived, when he found the army and the generals masters in the dispute; and when, as he had hitherto been used with some degree

gree of respect, upon their prevailing, he saw himself treated with very little deference or consideration. He therefore resolved to seek safety by flight, and, attended by two of his courtiers, fled from his confinement, and travelled on horseback all night to the sea side, in order to embark for France, leaving behind him a letter to both houses of parliament. His usual fortunes, however, still attended him here; no ship was in readiness at the place appointed, and he had no other method left, but to trust to the generosity of the Governor of the Isle of Wight for protection. Colonel Hammond was then in that command; a creature of Cromwell, who had been placed there by the interest of John Hampden, whom we have seen such an opposer of the King. His Majesty's attendants, whose names were Ashburnham and Berkeley, went to talk with the Governor upon this important occasion; who, instead of promising the protection required, only returned an evasive answer, and desired to be conducted to the King. Upon this all three went together to the house, where the unfortunate Monarch expected their arrival; but Hammond staid below. When Ashburnham informed his Majesty that Hammond was come to wait upon him, but that he had given no promise for protection, the King, who had now found almost all the world unfaithful, could not help crying out, *O Jack, thou hast undone me.* Ashburnham burst into a shower of tears, and offered to kill Hammond that moment with his own hand. The humane monarch would not permit this. Hammond was brought up, and the King being compelled to follow him to Carisbrook-castle, was once more made a prisoner, and treated by Hammond with only the outward appearances of respect.

In

In the mean time, the parliament continued every day to grow more feeble, and more factious; the army more powerful and better united. Cromwell had taken every precaution to establish such a subordination among his troops, as was necessary to conduct them with ease, and invigorate his proceedings. But his views were in some danger of being controverted, at this juncture, by a new and unheard-of confederacy. The Independants were for having no subordination in government. A set of men called Levellers now arose, who declared against any other governor than Christ. They declared that all degrees should be levelled, and an equality universally established in titles and estates. They presented several petitions, and carried their insolence to an immeasurable pitch. Cromwell at once saw that he was now upon the point of losing all the fruits of his former schemes and dangers, and dreaded this new faction still the more, as they turned his own pretended principles against himself: thus finding all at stake, he was resolved, by one resolute blow, to disperse the faction, or perish in the attempt. Having intimation that the Levellers were to meet at a certain place, he unexpectedly appeared before the terrified assembly, at the head of his red regiment, which had been hitherto invincible. He demanded, in the name of God, what their assembly and murmurings would be at; and, receiving an insolent answer, he laid two of the most remarkable dead upon the ground with his own hands. The guards dispersing the rest, he caused several of them to be hanged upon the spot, sent others prisoners to London, and thus dispersed a faction, no otherwise criminal than in having followed his own example.

This action served still more to encrease his power in the camp, in the parliament, and in the city.

Fairfax

Fairfax, now become a Lord, was nominally general, but Cromwell was invested with all the power of the army. The King, a prisoner, in the Isle of Wight, still continued to negotiate a peace; while the parliament saw no other method of destroying the military power which themselves had raised, but by opposing to it that of the King. Frequent propositions therefore passed between the captive Monarch and the commons; but the great obstacle, which was their insisting upon destroying Episcopacy, still defeated every measure.

In the mean time the Scotch, ashamed of having been thought to have sold their King, raised an army in his favour. Many of the young nobility in England seconded their intentions; the King's desperate affairs once more began to wear a favorable aspect, which Cromwell perceiving, led his veteran army to certain victory. Success still seemed to back his crimes; he defeated their forces entirely at Preston, and took the Duke of Hamilton, their general, prisoner. Fairfax on the other hand, was equally successful in Kent and Essex; the insurgents having retired into the city of Colchester, which declared for the King, he blocked them up, and having compelled them to surrender at discretion, he treated them with that inhumanity for which the republican army was at that time remarkable.

The parliament still continued to treat with the King, and, apprehending more from the designs of their generals than the attempts of their Monarch, seemed in earnest, for the first time, in their negotiations; but it was now too late; the army soon returned crowned with their accustomed success, and with furious remonstrances demanded justice upon the King. They accused him as the cause of all the misfortunes of the kingdom, and insisted that his partizans

tizans and favourites should share with him in his public punishment. This remonstrance was soon after backed by petitions from the garrisons dispersed over different parts of the kingdom, and the counties of Somerset and Norfolk concurred in the same demand. Fairfax, being influenced by Cromwell, and not perceiving that he was the tool of his crafty colleague, transferred his royal prisoner from the Isle of Wight to Hurst-castle. The parliament complained of this arbitrary proceeding, but their remonstrances were now but empty sound. They began to issue ordinances for a more effectual opposition; but they received a message from Cromwell, that he intended paying them a visit next day with his army, and in the mean time ordered them to raise him upon the city of London forty thousand pounds. Affrighted at the approaching danger, they complied with his demand; and in the mean time, the general with his army came and took up his quarters in the skirts of the city. The commons still proceeded in the treaty with the King, but this Cromwell was resolved to oppose: they voted, that the carrying the King prisoner to Hurst-castle was without the advice or consent of the house. To punish them for this, Cromwell placed guards round their house, and made those members prisoners whom he judged most opposite to his designs. One of his colonels, whose name was Pride, having a paper of names in his hand, seized upon one-and-forty, and sent them to the Court of Wards, where they were kept under guard. These were Presbyterians, the original authors of all the troubles, and who now fell victims to the side they had espoused. The next day an hundred more of the members were denied entrance; and that part of the house which now remained was entirely composed of a small body of

Indepen-

44 THE HISTORY OF ENGLAND,

Independants, ludicrously called the Rump. These soon voted, that the transactions of the house, a few days before, were illegal; and that the general's conduct was just and necessary.

This parliament, if it now deserves the name, was nothing but a medley of the most obscure citizens, the slave of the army, the officers of which, being themselves members, ruled all their proceedings. It was now therefore unanimously resolved in this seditious assembly to erect an High Court of Justice, with power to try the King for treason against the kingdom. For form-sake they desired the concurrence of the few remaining Lords in the other house; but even here there still was virtue enough left unanimously to reject so horrid a proposal. This no way abated the ardour of the commons; they voted that the concurrence of the house of Lords was unnecessary; they declared that all power was originally derived from the people; a declaration true in itself, but which they wrested to the most detestable purposes. Colonel Harrison, the son of a butcher, was commanded to conduct the King from Hurst-castle to Windsor. When he arrived there, the council of war ordained, that he should be no longer treated with the deference due to royalty. All ceremony was laid aside; and he now saw himself deprived of his servants, and exposed to the contempt of low-bred insolence. From the sixth to the twentieth of January, the time was employed in making preparations for this astonishing scene of guilt. One hundred and forty-five persons were appointed Judges upon this occasion; and one Bradshaw, a practitioner of the law, was elected as president of this detestable synod.

The King was now conducted from Windsor to St. James's, and was next day produced before the High Court at Westminster-hall to take his trial.

He

He still remembered the dignity he owed to himself before such an inferior court; and, taking his place with his hat on, with a stern air, surveyed his Judges, who were also covered. When his charge was read, importing that he had been the cause of all the blood that was shed since the commencement of the rebellion, he could not repress a smile at once of contempt and indignation. He then demanded by what authority he was brought to such a trial? To which Bradshaw replied, that he was tried in the name of the commons of England. The King then objected to the legality of the tribunal, since the sanction of the Lords and his own were wanting to complete it; and refused to plead to the articles of the impeachment. Being desired to answer several times, and persisting in his refusal, he was remanded to his confinement, and the court adjourned. At their second sitting the president again summoned the King to answer to his charge; and the King again demurred to the legality of his judges, and began to open his objections, when he was interrupted by Bradshaw, and sent back to prison, as before. At his third appearance, he continued firm to his purpose, and refused to reply, until he should be convinced that their proceedings were not contrary to the fundamental laws of the kingdom. The fourth and last time he appeared before this self-created court of justice, as he was going thither, he was insulted by the soldiers, and the mob, who exclaimed, *Justice, justice, execution, execution*. He appeared before the court with the same firm composure as usual, with his hat on; and while his sentence was reading, in which he was branded with all the odious appellations that malice could suggest, he discovered no other emotions than those of pity. In walking back from this horrid tribunal, the rabble

renewed

renewed the cry of *Justice, execution*; and among other insults one miscreant presumed to spit in the face of his King. He patiently wiped his face: *Poor souls*, said he, *they would treat their generals in the same manner for sixpence.* A soldier more compassionate than the rest could not help imploring a blessing upon his royal head; an officer overhearing it, struck the pious centinel to the ground in presence of the Monarch, who could not help saying, *that the punishment exceeded the offence.* The day of execution was fixed to be the third after his sentence; which when it arrived, he was conducted on foot through St. James's Park to Whitehall, accompanied by Doctor Juxon, and guarded by a regiment of foot, under the command of Colonel Tomlinson. The scaffold was covered with black, in the middle of which were seen the block and ax, with two executioners in masques. The soldiers were placed round it, and an infinite concourse of spectators waited with silent horror at a greater distance. The King surveyed all their solemn preparations with calm composure; he assured the persons who stood with him upon the scaffold, that he thought himself guiltless of any crime but that of having given up the Earl of Strafford to the fury of his enemies; and that he had confidence in the mercy of Heaven. While he thus avowed his innocence, the Bishop who attended him warned him that he had but one stage more to heaven; at which the King cried out, *I go from a corruptible to an incorruptible crown, where no disturbance can arrive.* "You are exchanged, replied the Bishop, from a temporal to an eternal crown; a good exchange!" Having now taken off his cloak, he delivered his George to the Prelate, emphatically pronouncing the word, *Remember.* He then laid his head on the block, and stretched forth his hands as a signal.

One

One of the men in a masque severed his head from his body at a blow; and the other, holding it up streaming with gore, cried out, *This is the head of a traitor*. Such was the death of Charles, who lived long enough to see the laws and constitution of his country expire before him. He had the misfortune to be bred up in high notions of the prerogative, which he thought it his duty to sustain. He lived at a time when the spirit of the law was in opposition to the genius of the people; and governing by old rules, instead of endeavouring to accommodate himself to the changes of the times, he fell in the universal convulsion. Many Kings before him expired by treasons, plots, or assassination; but never since the times of Agis the Lacedemonian was any but he sacrificed by their subjects with all the formalities of justice. Upon the whole, it must be confessed, that, though the nation was branded by foreigners with reproach upon this occasion, yet these struggles at length ended in domestic happiness and security; the laws became more precise, and the subject more ready to obey, as if a previous fermentation in the constitution was necessary to its subsequent refinement.

LETTER XLIV.

CROMWELL, who had secretly solicited the King's death, now began to feel wishes to which he had been hitherto a stranger; he perceived himself not far removed from the object of his most unbounded ambition. His views expanded with success, and his first principles of liberty shrunk when opposed to the unbounded prospect of power. The parliament which was still permitted to enjoy the shadow of
authority,

authority, voted it high treason to acknowledge Charles Stewart, son of the murdered King, as successor to the throne. They likewise voted the house of Lords useless and dangerous, and passed an act for the abolition of all kingly power. A great seal was made, on one side of which were engraved the arms of England and Ireland, with this inscription, *The great seal of England*; on the reverse was represented the house of commons sitting, with this motto, *The first year of freedom, by God's blessing restored*, 1648.

They next proceeded to try those gallant men whose attachment to their late Sovereign had been most remarkable. The Duke of Hamilton and Lord Capel were accused, condemned, and beheaded; several others shared the same fate. The Earl of Norwich and Sir John Owen were condemned, but reprieved. The Scotch were not a little displeased at the death of the Duke, who was executed not only contrary to the laws of war, but the law of nations; they were therefore determined to acknowledge the young Prince for their King. But their love of liberty, in some measure, seemed to combat their resentment; they called him to the throne indeed, but, at the same time, abridged his power with every limitation which they had formerly attempted to impose on their late Sovereign. The second Charles had neither the virtue, the constancy, nor the principles of his father. Attached to no religion, he agreed to all their proposals, and was contented to accept the formalities without the power of a King. He was received at Edinburgh with demonstrations of profound respect, and entered the city by that very gate on which the limbs of the brave Montrose, one of his most faithful adherents, were still exposed; but he soon found that the life he was likely to lead would be an insupportable

portable bondage to one of his volatile disposition. He was surrounded and incessantly importuned by the Scotch fanatical clergy, who came to instruct him in religion, and obliged him to listen to long sermons, in which they seldom failed to stigmatize the late king as a tyrant, to accuse his mother of idolatry, and himself of an untoward disposition. Upon appointed days he was obliged to hear six sermons without intermission. They insisted upon his observing Sunday with a Jewish strictness. They even watched his looks; and, if he happened to smile at any part of their absurd enthusiasms, he was reprimanded for his profaneness. Charles for while bore this insolence with hypocritical tranquillity, and even pretended to be highly edified by their instructions: but, notwithstanding this, he only wished for an opportunity of escaping from such a variety of disgusting impertinence.

In the mean time the English parliament, alarmed at the king's restitution in Scotland; *A. D.* 1649. sent to recal Cromwell from Ireland, where he had carried on the war with his usual success. He had reduced Kilkenny and many other places, and prosecuted his conquests with surprising rapidity. However, he now left the war in that kingdom to be carried on by Ireton, his deputy-lieutenant; and returned to England, in obedience to the mandate of the parliament. When he took his seat in the house, the speaker thanked him for the services he had done the commonwealth. They then proceeded to deliberate upon the war with Scotland. They desired to know if Fairfax would conduct the enterprize. Fairfax, a rigid Presbyterian, who had all along fought from principle, declined opposing a nation which he considered as co-operating in the same good work for

which he had first drawn the sword; he therefore declined the command, sent his commission to the commons, and retired to spend the remainder of his life in privacy and peace.

This was an inlet to Cromwell's subsequent power; he was appointed general of the forces of the commonwealth, and soon marched into Scotland at the head of an army of eighteen thousand men, long accustomed to conquer. He found general Lesly at the head of an army far more numerous than his own, but undisciplined and mutinous. After some previous skirmishing, Cromwell saw himself in a very disadvantageous post near Dunbar, and his antagonist ready to take advantage of his incommodious situation. However, perceiving the Scots preparing to give him battle, he assured his soldiers that the Lord had delivered the enemy into his hands, and ordered his army to sing psalms, as already assured of the victory. The ministers of the Scotch army were not less sanguine in their assurances of victory than he; they boldly promised success in the name of the Lord, and excited a spirit of impatience among the soldiers. Victory, as always before, again declared for Cromwell, who routed the enemy with great slaughter, while he did not lose, on his side, above forty men in all.

Charles, who hated the Scotch army, and only dreaded Cromwell, was well enough pleased at this defeat. It served to introduce him to a greater share in the command than he was before permitted to enjoy. He therefore put himself at the head of that remnant which survived the defeat, and strengthened it by the royalists, who had been before excluded from his service. And now, instead of following Cromwell, who led his victo-

rious

rious troops to Perth, he resolved to seize this opportunity of penetrating into England, where he expected to be joined by numbers there still attached to his interests. His hopes in this were frustrated; his army, on their march, was lessened by continual desertion and disease. Few volunteers repaired to the royal standard; and he at length saw his vigilant enemy overtake him at Worcester. Both armies fought *A. D. 1651.* with equal intrepidity, but Cromwell was again victorious. Never was so complete a victory obtained by him before. Two thousand perished by the sword, and four times that number, being taken, were sold as slaves to the American planters. The conqueror became master of all Scotland, and set a price of a thousand pounds upon the head of the king.

Imagination can scarce conceive dangers more romantic, or distresses more severe, than those which attended the young king's escape from Worcester. After his hair was cut off, the better to effect his escape, he worked for some days, disguised as a peasant, at wood-cutting. He next made an attempt to retire into Wales, under the conduct of one Pendrell, a poor but faithful companion in his distress. But in this attempt he was disappointed, every pass being guarded to prevent his escape. Being obliged to return, he met one colonel Careless, who, like himself, had escaped the carnage at Worcester; and it was in his company that he was obliged to climb a spreading oak, among the thick branches of which they passed the day together, while the soldiers of the enemy went underneath in pursuit of him. From thence he passed with imminent danger, feeling all the vicissitudes of famine, fatigue, and pain, to the house

of one Mr. Lane, a worthy subject of his, in Staffordshire. Here he deliberated about the means of escaping to France. They agreed that he should ride before this gentleman's daughter, on a visit to one Mrs. Horton, who lived in the neighbourhood of Bristol. During this journey he every day met people whose persons he knew, and once passed through a whole regiment of the parliament army.

When they arrived at the house of Mr. Norton, the first person they saw was one of his own chaplains, sitting at the door, amusing himself with seeing people play at bowls. The king, after having taken proper care of his horse in the stable, was shewn to an apartment which Mrs. Lane had provided for him, upon pretence of indisposition. The butler, being sent to him with some refreshment, no sooner beheld his countenance, which was now very pale with anxiety and fatigue, than he recollected the visage of his king and master, and falling upon his knees, while the tears streamed down his cheeks, he cried out, "I am rejoiced to see your majesty." The king enjoined him secrecy, and the honest servant punctually kept his word. Having staid some days in this place, he repaired to the house of Colonel Wyndham, where he was cordially received, that gentleman's family having ever been noted for loyalty. Pursuing his route to the sea-side, he once more had a very providential escape from the little inn at which he lodged. It happened to be a solemn fast, and a fanatical weaver, who had fought in the parliament army, was preaching against the king, in a chapel fronting the house. Charles was actually one of the audience. A farrier of the same principles, who had been examining the horses belonging to

the passengers, came to assure the preacher, that he knew by the fashion of the shoes, that one of the stranger's horses came from the north. The preacher instantly affirmed, that this horse could belong to no other than Charles Stewart, and went immediately with a constable to the house; but the king, in the mean time, found means to escape. Thus, at length, after inexpressible hardships, and having experienced the fidelity of forty different persons of all ranks, who had power to betray him, he embarked at Brighthelmsted, and landed safely in Normandy.

Cromwell, in the mean time, returned to London in triumph, where he was met by *Sept. 12.* the speaker of the house, accompanied by the mayor and magistrates in their formalities. His first care, upon his return, was to take the advantage of his successes, by depressing the Scotch. An act was passed for abolishing royalty in Scotland, and annexing it as a conquered province to the English commonwealth, impowering it, however, to send a certain number of representatives to the British parliament. It was now seen with astonishment, that a parliament composed of obscure and weak members could govern at once with unanimity and success. Without any acknowledged subordination they levied armies, maintained fleets, and gave laws to their neighbours. Never was England more powerful than at this period. The finances were managed with economy and exactness. No private person became rich by public extortions. The revenues of the crown, the lands of the bishops, and a tax of a hundred and twenty thousand pounds each month, supplied the wants of government, and invigorated all their proceedings.

Having reduced the British dominions to perfect obedience, the parliament next resolved to chastise the Dutch, who had given but very slight causes of complaint. Dorislaus one of the late king's judges, being sent thither by the commons as envoy, was assassinated by the royal party that had taken refuge there; St. John, appointed English ambassador, was also insulted by the friends of the prince of Orange. These were grounds sufficient to incense the republic of England to a war. Its success, however, was doubtful; Blake commanded the English, and Van Tromp was admiral of Holland; both equally experienced, courageous, and active. Several engagements served only to shew the excellence of the admirals, without determining the balance of naval power. The parliament, however, was willing to continue the war, rightly judging that, when the force of the nation was exerted by sea, it would diminish Cromwell the general's power upon land.

Cromwell was not behind them in penetration; he saw they dreaded his growing power, and wished to diminish it; all his measures were conducted with a bold intrepidity that marked his character; and he was now resolved to make another daring effort. He persuaded his officers to present a petition for payment of arrears and redress of grievances, which he knew would be rejected with disdain. The house, upon receiving it, appointed a committee to prepare an act, that all persons who presented such petitions for the future should be deemed guilty of high treason. This was what Cromwell wished for. He was sitting in council with his officers, when informed of the subject on which the house was deliberating. Turning to major-general Vernon, *I am compelled*, cried he, *to do a thing that makes the very hair of my head stand on end*: and, starting up with

with marks of violent indignation in his countenance, he hastened to the parliament, with a body of three hundred soldiers. Upon entering the house, he took his place, and sat some time to hear the debates; when the speaker was about to put the question, he suddenly rose up, and, reviling them for their ambition and cruelty, he stamped with his foot, and instantly the house was filled with armed men. Then addressing himself to the members, *Get you gone, A. D. 1653.* said he; *give place to honest men; you are no longer a parliament; I tell you you are no longer a parliament, the Lord has done with you.* He then accused one as a drunkard, another as a whoremaster, a third of adultery, and a fourth of extortion. *It is you,* added he, *that have forced me upon this; I have sought the Lord night and day, that he would rather slay me than put me upon this work.* Then pointing to the mace, *Take away,* cried he, *that bauble:* after which, turning out all the members, he ordered the door to be locked, and, putting the key in his pocket, retired to Whitehall. Thus by one daring exploit the new republic was abolished, and the whole power, civil and military, centered in him alone. The unsteady form of the English government at that time, is the strongest proof of a late philosopher's opinion, that every country is possessed of a set of laws and constitutions best adapted to the nature of the inhabitants, the climate and the soil, which, when once broken through, the government must continue weak and unsteady, until the natural constitution is restored: as in mechanics, all bodies continue to waver till their center of gravity is supported.

L E T T E R XLV.

THAT parliament which had long gloried in resisting violence, was now dissolved by an act of the most flagrant oppression. The people, however, expressed no dislike at their dissolution. Cromwell received congratulatory addresses from the fleet, the corporations, and the army; but he was unwilling to put forth all his power at once; he resolved to amuse them with the form of a commonwealth, and familiarize them by degrees to arbitrary government. He decreed that the sovereign power should be vested in one hundred and forty-four persons; under the denomination of a parliament; and he undertook himself to make the choice. The persons he pitched upon were the lowest, meanest, and most ignorant among the citizens; he foresaw, that, during the administration of such, he alone must govern; or that they would soon throw up the reins of government, which they were unqualified to guide. To excel in fanaticism, seemed a necessary qualification in this new parliament. Several, with long names borrowed from scripture, were members; but a man, whose name was *Praise God Beadones*, was one of the most remarkable; and by his name the assembly was afterwards called in ridicule.

To this assembly was committed the care of making peace with the Dutch; but, being utterly unskilled in such negotiations, the ambassadors of the states were quite at a loss how to treat with them. The people exclaimed at so foolish a legislature, and they themselves seemed not insensible of the contempt and ridicule which they every day

day failed not to incur. They had now sate five months without doing any thing of importance; when at length Rouse, their speaker, rose up, and proposed that, as they were unable to bear the burden that was laid upon them, they should resign their authority to him from whom they had received it. Cromwell accepted their resignation with pleasure, and sent colonel White to clear the house of the few fanatics who persisted in continuing to sit. White, entering with a detachment of soldiers, asked, *What they did there!* To which replying, that they were seeking the Lord: *Then you may go elsewhere,* cried he, *for to my certain knowledge, the Lord has not been here these many years.*

The officers now, by their own authority, declared Cromwell protector. He was possessed of that which is the original of all command, namely, force; for the strong ever give laws to the feeble. The mayor and aldermen were sent for; the usurper was installed at Whitehall, in the palace of the English kings; he assumed the office of protector; was honoured with the epithet of Highness, and proclaimed in London, and other parts of the kingdom. Thus an obscure inhabitant of Wales, at length, rose to unlimited power, far beyond that of former kings, by his courage and his hypocrisy.

He was about fifty-three years of age when he began to reign, which he did with equal conduct, moderation, and success. He, in the beginning, chose among the officers, the former companions of his dangers and victories, twenty-one counsellors of state, to each of whom he assigned a pension of one thousand pounds a year. The troops were always paid a month in advance; the magazines were well provided; the public treasure,

of which he had the disposal, was managed with frugality and care. The Dutch were compelled to sue for peace, and he dictated the terms. He insisted upon their paying deference to the British flag. They were compelled to abandon the interest of the king; they engaged to pay eighty-five thousand pounds, as an indemnification for former expences; and to restore the English East-India company a part of those dominions of which they had unjustly deprived them in the east.

Every nation with whom the English had any connection, now courted their protector's alliance. Among the number, France solicited his aid against Spain: Cromwell, though capable of conducting the internal parts of government, had no skill in foreign policy. He lent his assistance to humble Spain, at a time when the interests of Europe required her exaltation. Cardinal Mazarine gave him up Dunkirk. His fleet, under the conduct of the famous Blake, took the island of Jamaica. The kingdom of Ireland was entirely reduced to obedience, and treated by him as a conquered country; many thousands of the wretched natives strove to find, in banishment, an alleviation of their miseries; numbers died of famine, and by the hands of the executioner not a few.

Cromwell, to give the greater appearance of justice to his usurpation, was resolved to govern by parliament, yet by such a parliament alone as he could govern. He assembled them, and dissolved them at pleasure; the house of Lords was entirely discontinued; but he set up a new chamber of parliament, composed of his own creatures, to oppose that elected by the voices of the people. Thus, ever active, vigilant, and resolute, he discovered every conspiracy against his person, and every insurrection

urrection among the people, before they took effect. He had the address to prevail upon his parliament, to make him an offer of the crown, merely to have the seeming magnanimity of refusing it, and thus to confirm his real power. A. D. 1657.

His private life was no less worthy our observation; he led an obscure life in the palace assigned for his habitation, without pomp, without luxury. When he sent his son Henry into Ireland, he allowed him but one servant in his retinue. His manners were naturally austere, and he preserved the dignity and distance of his character in the midst of the coarsest familiarity. He was cruel from policy, just and temperate from inclination; laborious and exact in all his designs; without eloquence he had the talent of persuading; and without sincerity the art of making sincere adherents; his dexterity equally satisfied every sect; with Presbyterians, a Presbyterian; with Deists, a Deist; only an Independant in principle. It was by these arts he continued his authority, first cemented by blood, and maintained by hypocrisy and usurpation.

Yet, notwithstanding this conduct, which contributed to render him truly formidable at home, he was, after a few years reign, become truly miserable to himself. He knew that he was detested by every party in the kingdom; he knew the fierce spirit of the people whom he had made slaves; and he was incessantly haunted by the terrors of an assassination. To increase his calamity, a book was published, intitled, *Killing no murder*; in which it was proved to be just to destroy him at any rate. *Shall we*, said this popular declaimer, *who would not suffer the lion to invade us, tamely*

stand to be devoured by the wolf? Cromwell read this spirited treatise, and, it is said, was never seen to smile afterwards. He wore armour under his cloaths, and always kept a loaded pistol in his pocket; his aspect became cloudy, and he regarded every stranger with a glance of timid suspicion. He always travelled with hurry and precipitation, and never slept two nights successively in the same apartment. A tertian ague came at last to deliver him from a life of horror and misery. *A. D. 1658.* He died at Whitehall, after having nominated his son Richard Cromwell as his successor. Notwithstanding the evident approaches of death, his fanatical chaplains affirmed that he would recover, and thanked God for the undoubted assurances they had received of his safety. He was even of the same opinion himself. *I tell you,* cried he to the physicians that attended him, *I shall not die of this distemper; favourable answers have been returned from heaven, not only to my own supplications, but likewise to those of the godly, who carry on a more intimate correspondence with the Lord.* This behaviour, at his death, is an undeniable proof that he was in reality more an enthusiast than an hypocrite; and, in fact, we are more frequently deceived than deceivers.

Whatever were the differences of interest after the death of the usurper, the influence of his name was still sufficient to get Richard his son proclaimed protector. The parties, however, were now grown too headstrong to be controuled by greater abilities; what then could Richard do, who had nothing active in his disposition, no talents for business, no knowledge of government, no ambition, no importance? Oliver, by means of the army, had long governed the kingdom; they were now left to

to govern alone. They first therefore presented a petition to the new protector, demanding that no member of the army should be subject to the civil power, and that the officers should enjoy the privilege of chusing their own general. Richard, shocked at their presumption, rejected their requests, and even threatened to dismiss them the service. The parliament attempted to support these measures of Richard, but the army prevailed; the parliament was dissolved by their menaces, and the protector again reduced to a private station. The officers, once more being thus left to themselves, determined to replace the remnant of the old parliament which had beheaded the king, and which the late protector had so disgracefully dismissed. This was called *The good old cause*; and such of the higher officers as seemed unwilling to give up their authority to this parliament, were intimidated by their subalterns into a compliance.

The Rump parliament, as it was called, being thus once again established, began by vigorously attempting to lessen the power of that very army which had just now given them all their authority. They new-modelled a part of the forces, cashiered such officers as they feared, and placed others in their room. These attempts, however, did not pass without vigorous efforts in the principal officers who were at London to oppose them. They held several conferences together to strengthen their power, and lessen that of their opposers. They at length came to the usual resource of these turbulent times; they first presented a seditious petition, and, upon finding it rejected, conducted by general Lambert, they entered the house, excluded the members, dissolved the parliament by their own authority, and formed a council of ten
to

62 THE HISTORY OF ENGLAND,

to provide for the safety of the commonwealth. During these transactions, general Monck was at the head of twelve thousand veterans in Scotland. This general had begun his fortunes under the command of the late King, and was taken prisoner in his service. Upon the death of his master, he was released from his long confinement to command under Cromwell, for whom he always fought with conduct and success.

In this anarchy and confusion he seemed agitated by different designs, between loyalty to his lawful king, ambition to advance himself, and the apprehensions he was under from the governing part of the nation; his loyalty at length prevailed; he resolved to restore the royal family, but to use all the precautions that were requisite for their safety and his own. He soon had an opportunity of embarrassing the affairs of the nation still more, to prepare the way for the meditated revolution. The officers, now formed into a council of ten, had sent to treat with him; he consented to a negotiation only in order to gain time; and after a treaty had been actually signed by those he employed in this business, he refused to ratify it upon frivolous pretences. The deposed parliament, finding that Monck had disapproved of the proceedings of the officers at London, were resolved to avail themselves of his friendship, in order to be reinstated in their former authority; and sent him a private commission, appointing him commander in chief of all the forces in England, Scotland, and Ireland. He now therefore resolved to march towards London, and upon his approach, the officers who had deposed the parliament found themselves almost deserted, and at length compelled to resign the authority they had usurped. When he reached

reached St. Alban's, he sent a letter to the house, desiring that London should be cleared of all other troops to make way for his approach. This demand awakened the suspicion of the parliament, but they were reluctantly obliged to comply. He entered London in triumph, at the head of his army, and repaired to the council of state, but refused to take the oath of abjuration, shrewdly observing, that the fewer oaths were taken, the cleaner would the consciences be. He next examined his officers, and, having secured their concurrence, he restored those members to the parliament which long since had been secluded before the trial of the king.

The Independants, who had voted for the trial of Charles, were now greatly out-numbered; and it was soon seen that the royal party was likely to prevail. The republicans, who, though they hated a protector, still more feared the royal resentment, endeavoured to persuade Monk to assume the sovereign power, in imitation of Cromwell. He rejected their advice, and in the mean time gave the king private intimations of his designs, new-modelled the army, quelled an incipient insurrection, and prepared all things for his restoration.

Nothing now was wanting, but the authority and consent of a free parliament, to settle the fluctuating constitution. *A. D. 1659.*

On the twenty-fifth of April, 1660, the new parliament met in both houses, after the manner of their ancestors. They immediately voted that the government ought to be vested in a king, lords, and commons. On the eighth of May Charles II. was proclaimed in London; on the twenty-sixth he arrived at Dover; on the twenty-ninth he passed
on

6 THE HISTORY OF ENGLAND.

on to Whitehall, through an innumerable multitude of people, who rent the air with their acclamations. The wretched kingdom, long torn with faction, and oppressed by its own struggles for freedom, once more began to respire; fanaticism, with all its train of melancholy terrors and cruelties, was now dispelled; the arts of peace began to return; but, unhappily, the arts of luxury entered in their train.

L E T T E R XLVI.

IT will undoubtedly astonish posterity, when they find a whole nation making these sudden changes from absolute liberty to the most submissive obedience; at one time almost unanimously declaring against monarchy, and soon after, with the most *A. D. 1660.* unbounded flattery, soliciting the shackles of arbitrary power. The parliament, which had before so vehemently opposed the late monarch, possessed of every virtue, were now profuse in their submissions to his successor, whose character stood in no competition with that of his father.

They first ordained that the bodies of Cromwell, Ireton, and Bradshaw, should be dug from their graves, and dragged to the place of execution; there to continue hanging the whole day, and then to be interred under the gallows. Of those who sat in judgment on the late monarch's trial, some were dead, and some were thought worthy to find pardon; ten only out of fourscore were devoted to immediate destruction. These were enthusiasts, who had all along acted from principle, and bore their fate with all the confidence of martyrs. They had

had been formerly cruel themselves, and they were now in turn treated with shocking inhumanity; the executioners not content with performing the office of death, added insult to their tortures; the sufferers, to a man, thanked God for being permitted to die for his cause, and braved the fury of their oppressors with manly contempt.

Their deaths seemed to inspire a few desperate enthusiasts with the most strange confidence that ever deluded a poor ignorant party. One Venner, who expected the immediate coming of Christ upon earth, appeared in the streets of London in arms, at the head of threescore enthusiasts like himself, and declared against any other monarch but king Jesus. They had been wrought into such a pitch of phrenzy as to believe themselves invulnerable, and fought as men confident of victory. The few survivors of their defeat were taken, tried, condemned, and executed: they affirmed to the last, that, if they had been deceived, the Lord himself concurred in the imposture.

It was now feared that the tide of loyalty would bear down all the former mounds of freedom; the parliament seemed to concur in all the designs of the court, and even to anticipate its wishes; but though the king was established, his old faithful friends, and the followers of his family, were left unrewarded. There were numbers who had fought for his father, and for him, and had lost their all in his service, still pining in want and misery; while their persecutors, who, profiting by the troubles of their country, had acquired fortunes during the civil war, were still permitted to enjoy them without molestation. The sufferers petitioned in vain; Charles was no way remarkable for gratitude;

gratitude; his pleasures, his flatterers, and concubines engrossed all his attention, and exhausted his finances; the unhappy cavaliers murmured without redress; he fled from their gloomy expositions to scenes of mirth, riot, and festivity.

The kingdom now seemed to be converted into a theatre of debauchery, which had before been a scene of blood. The independants were no longer to be seen; the puritans were restrained; the horrors of the late war were the subject of ridicule; the formality and the ignorance of sectaries were displayed upon the stage, and even laughed at in the pulpit. The king had no religion; and, though he permitted the persecution of sectaries, it was merely from political motives. The late miseries of the nation were not sufficient to deter a few desperate fanatics from attempting to excite them afresh; they laid a scheme for surprising several towns in the North, and raising a general insurrection; the ministry discovered the plot, before it was ripe for execution; thirty of the conspirators were taken and executed; and this plot was a pretext for continuing the parliament then sitting, and repealing the act for triennial parliaments, as being dangerous in times of commotion.

The English parliament seemed willing to make the king reparation for their former disobedience, and the Scotch were still more sanguine in the expressions of their attachment. Had Charles been an active monarch, he might have now become an absolute one. They confirmed the doctrine of passive obedience by a solemn act; they assigned him a revenue of twelve hundred thousand pounds, exclusive of the expence necessary for fitting and supplying the fleet. None of his predecessors were
ever

ever possessed of such a large revenue; nevertheless, his prodigality rendered him indigent, and, instead of desiring an ascendancy over his parliament, he was content to be an humble and continual dependant on their bounty.

His prodigality, his libertinism, and the familiarity with which he permitted himself to be treated by his subjects, soon began to alter their sentiments from a veneration for royalty to a contempt of his person and administration. He declared war against Holland, merely to have an opportunity of spending upon his pleasures a part of those sums granted him by parliament for the support of a fleet and army. This war was carried on with doubtful success; but the alarm which the nation received from Ruyter the Dutch admiral's attempting to sail up the river Thames, still more disgusted them against their governor. Immediate dangers, though small, influence the mind with greater force than distant, though terrible calamities. They now called to mind the administration of Cromwell, when the people enjoyed security at home, and were respected abroad; they recollected that usurper's vigorous labours for the good of the nation, and compared them with those of the present effeminate and unsuccessful reign.

Natural and accidental calamities seemed to unite themselves to those brought on by bad management. A plague ravaged London which swept away more than one hundred thousand of its inhabitants; and soon after the city was almost entirely destroyed by a conflagration, which raged for three days without intermission. The spirit of the people soon surmounted these calamities; London soon rose more beautiful from its

its ashes; the streets were built anew more spacious and convenient than before; and their distress soon became their advantage.

But neither war, nor accident, nor the murmurs of the people could abate the passion for gallantry, pleasure, and expence, that reigned in the court through the king's example. He had imbibed all that spirit of levity, during his residence in France, for which that kingdom is remarkable. Though he had been married soon after his restoration to the Infanta of Portugal, he kept several mistresses; by whom he had natural issue. Among this number were mademoiselle Querouaille, a French woman, whom he created duchess of Portsmouth; Mrs. Palmer, whom he made a countess; and Nel Gwyn and Mrs. Davis, actresses taken from the theatre.

But, though the court was thus lost to decency, the passion for uniformity in religion in the nation seemed to revive. The parliament was equally set against the presbyterians and the papists; an *A. D. 1673.* act was made called the *Test act*, importing, that every person in office and employment should take the oaths of allegiance and supremacy, receive the sacrament in some parish church before competent witnesses, and subscribe a declaration, renouncing the doctrine of transubstantiation. This was levelled against the duke of York, the king's brother, who had professed himself a papist, and whom the parliament secretly aimed at excluding from the throne. The fears and discontents of the nation were vented without restraint; the apprehensions of a popish successor, an abandoned court, a parliament that had continued, without a new election, for seventeen years; an alliance cemented with France,

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the secret enemy of England and the protestant religion; and an unsuccessful and expensive war with Holland, their natural allies; all gave cause to kindle a spirit of indignation among the people. The court tried every method, but in vain, to satisfy these murmurs, or appease them. Even the coffee-houses were suppressed where such topics were generally debated.

This universal ferment, as may easily be imagined, broke out into an alarm. When the spirit of the English is once excited, they either find objects of resentment, or they make them. The rumour of a popish conspiracy was first propagated, and one Titus Oates soon appeared to give it confirmation. *A. D. 1678.*

Titus Oates had been from his youth an indigent and infamous adventurer. He was abandoned, illiterate, and shameless. He had been once indicted for perjury, afterwards chaplain of a man of war, and dismissed for unnatural practices. He then professed himself a Roman catholic, went to the Jesuits college at St. Omer, but was dismissed, after some residence there, with infamy. He then returned to London, filled with projects of revenge; and the animosities of this unhappy nation soon appeared a proper place of nourishment to give this viper's virulence effect. He deposed upon oath, that the jesuits, several of whom he named, and who were soon after taken up, had tried the king under the name of the *Black Bastard*, condemned him as an heretic, and resolved to deprive him of life: that several attempts had been made without success, and that not only the king's brother, but even the queen were privy to the design. The house of commons immediately took fire at this pretended conspiracy; they petitioned for removing the

the queen, rewarded Oates with a pension of twelve hundred pounds, and immediately ordered the conspirators to be tried in the courts of justice. Several jesuits were tried; their very profession was at that time sufficient to destroy them; before a partial judge and an exasperated jury, no mercy could be expected, and several, though apparently innocent, were executed as traitors upon this miscreant's information. Coleman, the duke of York's secretary, Ireland, Pickering, Grove, Fenwick, and Whitebread were among the first that fell; they died declaring their innocence *A.D. 1679.* to the last moment of their lives.

While the protestants were labouring to humble both the puritans and the papists, these two parties were at the same time mutually employed in ruining each other. Plot was set against plot; that contrived by Oates was called the *Jesuits Plot*; that set to oppose it was called by the name of the *Meal-tub Plot*, as the scheme of the conspiracy was found hidden in a meal-tub. This was a design against Oates, for his perjuries had drawn upon him the furious resentment of the catholic party; they were determined to take away his life by the same false evidence by which he had taken the lives of so many of their fraternity.

Of all these plots tending to disturb the peace of the kingdom, it is said the earl of Shaftesbury was at the bottom; he had been a member of the long parliament in the civil wars, and had gained great influence among the presbyterians; he had insinuated himself into the confidence of Cromwell, and afterwards employed his credit in forwarding the restoration. He had been made one of the privy council in the present reign, but was ejected thence for the duplicity of his conduct.

He was possessed of uncommon abilities, joined with turbulence, dissimulation, and unbounded ambition. It was thought that this nobleman, in revenge for his disgrace at court, headed the demagogue faction, and alarmed the king with unceasing dangers.

He artfully increased the people's apprehensions of a popish successor, and, by his interest, brought a bill into the house of commons for the exclusion of James duke of York from the succession. In the national animosity raised against papists, it was no difficult matter to have it passed through the house of commons; but, being presented to the house of peers, it was thrown out by a great majority.

The commons were greatly incensed at this repulse, but particularly their anger fell upon the earl of Halifax, who exerted himself in the opposition. Halifax disregarded their anger, secure in conscious innocence. But their rage fell with more weight upon lord Stafford, who had long been a prisoner in the Tower, upon the deposition of Oates. Notwithstanding his age, his weak intellects, and the justness of his defence, he was arraigned, condemned, and executed for a plot, which had its only foundation in perjury and subornation. All things threatened a renewal of the former troubles from which the kingdom had been but lately set free. The commons presented petition after petition to the king, desiring the punishment of papists, and the abridgement of the royal prerogative. *A. D. 1680.*

They seemed willing to intimidate the king, or to inflame the nation. At length Charles shewed a degree of fortitude that surprised even his friends; he rejected their petitions with contempt, and dissolved

disbanded the parliament that had abused their power.

The state of the nation at that time, with regard to religion, was thus: The principal men at court, if they professed any, were of the established church; so were all the men of great property, as well as the dregs of the people; but that body of men who voted at elections, placed between a state of opulence and penury, were in general presbyterians. They were therefore willing to return representatives only of that persuasion.

Charles, however, was resolved to try one parliament more, and appointed them to meet him at Oxford, the city of London having long been displeasing, by reason of their republican principles. The new parliament, however, seemed still more turbulent than the former; the members came armed, and attended by their friends and adherents, as if they expected to fight, and not to deliberate. The representatives of London were, in particular, attended by a numerous body of horsemen, wearing cockades, inscribed, *No Popery, no Slavery*. To declaim against popery was the voice of faction in the last reign, and such it was in the present. The same spirit that had animated the former parliament, seemed redoubled in this. They insisted on the bill for excluding the duke of York from the succession; they persisted in declaring that all papists should be banished, and their children educated in the protestant religion; that the doctrine of passive obedience was injurious to the rights of society. In a word, the leaders of the opposition were resolved to be displeased with every measure the king could propose, and prepared to recall the former aristocracy into the kingdom. Charles, seeing that nothing could be

be expected from counsels managed by party, and not deliberation, once more dissolved this parliament, with a stedfast resolution of never calling another.

This was a stroke they had never expected, and which the times alone could justify. From the moment the royal and parliamentary commotions were ended, Charles seemed to rule with despotic power, and was resolved to leave to his successor the faults and the misfortunes of his administration. His temper, which had been always easy and merciful, became arbitrary, and even cruel; he entertained spies and informers round the throne, and imprisoned all such as he thought most daring in their designs. He resolved to humble the presbyterians; these were divested of their employments, and their places filled with such as approved the doctrine of non-resistance. The clergy testified their zeal to the court by their writings and sermons; the partizans of the king were most numerous; but those of the opposite faction were more enterprising; the mutual animosity of each was inflamed into rage and rancour, and the king openly declared himself at the head of a faction. The city of London particularly fell under his resentment; he deprived them of their charter, and only restored it when he had subjected the election of their magistrates to his immediate authority.

Such an arbitrary administration could not fail of exciting new insurrections; several noblemen, among whom were the duke of Monmouth, the king's natural son, the lords Shaftesbury, Russel, Grey, and others, entered into a combination to destroy the king, which was called *A. D. 1683.* afterwards the *Ryehouse plot*. The conspirators met at the house of one Shepherd, a wine-merchant,
 Vol. II. D where

where they proposed a rising in London, Bristol, Devonshire, and Cheshire. They agreed upon a declaration for justifying their design, but the scheme was at first delayed from the difficulty of the preparations previous to taking the field, and soon after discovered by one Keiling, who expected to earn a pardon for himself by imptaching his associates. As the plot began to open, new informers came in; Monmouth absconded, Grey escaped the messenger who had been sent to arrest him, Russel was committed to the Tower, and Shaftesbury, who foresaw the danger, had taken refuge in Holland. Lord Essex, Sidney, the famous legislator, and Hampden, grandson to him of that name, were informed against, and committed to confinement.

The principal informer upon this occasion was lord Howard, a man every way debauched, and who was willing to accept infamy for safety: by his evidence Russel and Sidney were condemned, and died with that intrepidity which was worthy a better cause. While these men were thus executed, Monmouth was in the mean time soliciting his pardon; and he who was most culpable, as his crime was most unnatural, easily obtained it.

The severities exercised in the latter part of this reign arose merely from the influence of the duke of York, who was as much inclined to cruelty by nature, as his brother Charles was prone to forgiveness. His authority was become terrible even to the ministry; by his advice the king seized upon all the charters of the corporations, in order to extort money for having them renewed. Partiality and oppression were the instruments of his power, and bigotry and innovation the objects of his

his wish. At this period the reign of Charles was as absolute as that of any monarch in christendom, and new discontents and treasons were secretly diffusing their poison, while the spirit of liberty still struggled hard against the spirit of obedience, which the clergy attempted to inculcate. Another civil war threatened the nation, still more dreadful than the former, as the forces were more equally divided. But Charles happily died before those calamities could return; he was suddenly seized with an apoplectic fit, in the fifty-fourth year of his age, and the twenty-fifth of his reign. The people, though they despised his administration, loved his person; they were willing to bear with the faults of one whose whole behaviour was a continued instance of good-nature and affability; but they were by no means willing to grant the same indulgence to his successor, whom they hated for his pride, his religion, his cruelty, and connections. He was unfit to walk in the irregular steps of his predecessor; and, when he pursued the same route, fatal experience soon convinced him that he had at once mistaken himself and the people he attempted to command.

But, though England, during the reign of Charles, seemed, in some measure, agitated like the ocean after a storm, yet commerce continued to increase with its usual celerity and success. The manufacture of certain stuffs, glass, copper, steel, paper, hats, and stockings, were now brought to perfection. Upon the banishing the protestants from France, numbers came and settled here, and brought their arts with them. This application to arts and commerce gave England great weight in the balance of Europe; Britain became the center of politics and arms. Though literature was but

76. THE HISTORY OF ENGLAND,

little encouraged by the sovereign, yet the learned made great proficiency in every department of science; and the philosophers of England began to take the lead. Newton, Tillotson, Burnet, Hobbes, and Shaftesbury enlarged the land-marks of human knowledge; Butler, Dryden, Otway, gave strength and propriety to the language. In a word, the character of the nation now began to alter; the natural rudeness of the inhabitants began to take a polish from good breeding, and British ferocity to meliorate into social politeness.

L E T T E R XLVII.

AS we descend, we find the materials for English history increase; the minutest transactions are recorded with prolixity; and these, however dry and unimproving to some, are yet both interesting and satisfactory to others. In such a profusion of materials I must be content rather to give the spirit of the following reigns, than pretend to exhibit an historical detail of particular interests and intrigues. It will be enough to mark those strong out-lines that may probably escape the wreck of time, when the internal colouring shall fade. As history increases in time by the addition of new events, an epitome becomes more necessary to abridge its excrescences.

The duke of York, who succeeded his brother, with the title of king James the Second, had been bred a papist, and was strongly bigotted to his principles. It is the property of that religion, almost ever, to contract the sphere of the understanding; and, until people are, in some measure, disengaged from its prejudices,

prejudices, it is impossible to lay a just claim to extensive views, or consistency of design. The intellects of this prince were naturally weak, and his bigotted principles still rendered them more feeble; he conceived the ridiculous project of reigning in the arbitrary manner of his predecessor, and changing the established religion of his country, at a time when his person was hated, and the established religion was universally approved.

The people of England were now entirely changed from what they had been in the times of Henry, Mary, and Elizabeth, who had altered religion at will. Learning was now as much cultivated by the laity as by the priesthood; every man now pretended to think for himself, and had rational grounds for his opinion. In the beginning of the reformation the monarchs had only to bring over the clergy, in order totally to change the modes of belief, for the people were entirely guided by their pastors. To influence the priesthood was an easy task. The hopes of preferment, or the fears of degradation, entirely subjected the consciences of the clergy to the royal will. Such it was then; but the circumstances of the nation were, at present, entirely altered; and, to make a change in religion, it would have been necessary to tamper with every individual in the state. But James had no idea of the alteration of circumstances; his situation, he thought, supplied him with authority, and his zeal furnished him with hope of accomplishing this chimerical design.

The success he met with in crushing a rebellion, in the opening of his reign, seemed to promise a favourable omen towards the completion of his wishes. The duke of Monmouth, who had long

been at the head of faction, and inflamed all the discontent that molested the late king's reign, was now resolved to aim at the crown. He was the darling of the people; and some averred that the king had married his mother, and owned his legitimacy at his death. The earl of Argyle seconded his views, and they formed the scheme of a double insurrection. Argyle first landed in Scotland, published his manifestoes, put himself at
A. D. 1685. the head of two thousand five hundred men, and attempted to influence the nation; but a formidable body of the king's forces coming against him, his army fell away, and he himself, after being wounded in attempting to escape, was taken by a peasant, standing up to his neck in water. Being brought to Edinburgh, he prepared for death, well knowing that it was not in the king's nature to forgive an enemy.

The duke of Monmouth was not more fortunate; he sailed from the Texel with three vessels, and arrived on the coasts of Dorsetshire with about fourscore followers. The country soon flocked in to his standard, and in two days his army was increased to two thousand men. The earl of Feversham was sent to oppose him, and took post at Sedgemore, a village in Somersetshire. Monmouth resolved to fight him, and began his march about eleven in the night, with profound silence; but the royalists were prepared for his reception. The action began at day-break; lord Grey, who commanded the duke of Monmouth's horse, was routed at the first onset. The duke, at the head of his infantry, bravely maintained his ground until he was charged in flank by the enemy's horse, who had been just now victorious. A total rout ensued; three hundred were killed in the engagement,

ment, and a thousand in the pursuit. The duke escaped the carnage, and, in a shepherd's disguise, fled on foot, attended by a faithful companion, who had followed his fortunes into England. Thus they travelled onward towards Dorsetshire, till, quite exhausted with hunger and fatigue, they lay down in a field, and covered themselves with stubble. In this forlorn situation he was found, with some pease in his pocket, which he had gathered in the fields to sustain life. His spirit sunk with his misfortunes; he wrote to the king; implored his mercy; the king gave him an audience, as if willing to satisfy his vengeance with the sight of a rival's misery. But his death was determined, and no intreaties could extort royal clemency. On the scaffold he resumed his former courage, handled the ax, declared that he meant well to the nation, and his head was cut off, but not till after the third blow.

But it were happy for the nation, and fortunate for the king, if the blood that was already shed had been thought a sufficient expiation for the late offence. The victorious army behaved with the most savage cruelty to the prisoners taken after the battle. Their inhumanity was properly seconded by Jefferies, who was sent on the western circuit to try the insurgents. His furious thirst of blood being inflamed by continual intoxication, he threatened, calumniated, and threw aside even the appearance of clemency. Men and women indiscriminately felt the effects of his savage zeal; and not less than two hundred and fifty persons expired under circumstances of wanton cruelty. Cruel kings ever find cruel ministers.

It was not to be expected, that these butcheries could acquire the king the love or the confidence

of his people, or tend to alter their opinions, as they rather excited the secret abhorrence of every honest man. Yet he thought this a time favourable for the carrying on his scheme of religion and arbitrary government. An attempt at arbitrary power in Charles was, in some measure, excusable, as he had a republican faction to oppose; and it might have been prudent, at that time, to overstep justice, in order to attain security; but the same designs in James were as unnecessary as impracticable, since there were few republicans remaining, and the people were satisfied with limited monarchy. But this weak and deluded monarch was resolved to imitate one or two princes of Europe, who had just before rendered themselves absolute; and he was incited to this project by Lewis XIV. who secretly desired his destruction. Thus instigated, he began his designs with the measures which he should not have used till their completion. He sent a splendid embassy to Rome, to acknowledge his obedience to the pope. Innocent, who then filled the chair, was too good a politician to approve those childish measures, and gave his ambassador a very cool reception. He was sensible that the king was openly striking at those laws and opinions which it was his business to undermine in silence and security. The cardinals were even heard facetiously to declare, *that the king should be excommunicated for thus endeavouring to overturn the small remains of popery that yet subsisted in England.*

James, notwithstanding these discouragements, was yet resolved to prosecute his favourite scheme with vigour. Upon every occasion the catholics shared his confidence and favour. Hugh Peters, his confessor, ruled his conscience, and drove him
blindly

blindly forward to attempt innovation. He became every day more and more ambitious of making converts; the earl of Sunderland sacrificed his religion to his ambition; the earl of Rochester lost his employment of treasurer, for refusing to alter his religion. The king stooped so low as to his officers: a rough soldier one day answered his remonstrances by saying that he was pre-engaged, for he had promised the king of Morocco, when he was quartered at Tangiers, that, should he ever change his religion, he would turn Mahometan.

An ecclesiastical court was erected, with power to punish all delinquents, or such so
reputed by the court, with all man- *A. D. 1686;*
ner of ecclesiastical censures. The vice-chancellor of Cambridge was summoned before this court for having refused to admit one Francis, a Benedictine monk, to the degree of master of arts; the vice-chancellor was deprived of his office, but the university persisted in their refusal, and the king thought proper to desist from his purpose. The vice-president and fellows of Magdalen-college in Oxford were treated with more severity. They refused to admit one Farmer, a new convert, and one of a profligate life, who was nominated by the king to the place of president, now become vacant. The king next nominated Parker, bishop of Oxford; but he was equally obnoxious for the same reasons. The king repaired in person to Oxford; he reproached the fellows with insolence and disobedience; but neither he, nor his ministers, could prevail to alter the resolutions of this society. The fellows were expelled by his order, and their places filled with papists, who he knew would be more obedient to his commands.

His designs hitherto were sufficiently manifest;

but he was now resolved entirely to throw off the mask. By his permission the pope's nuncio made his public entry into Windsor in his pontificals, preceded by the cross, and attended by a great number of monks in the habit of their respective orders. He next published a declaration for liberty of conscience, by which all restraints upon popery were taken away. The church of England took the alarm; the peculiar animosity of the people against the catholic religion proceeded not less from religious than temporal motives. It is the spirit of that religion to favour arbitrary power, and its reproach to encourage persecution. The English had too often smarted under both to be willing again to submit to either. Seven bishops, who had received the king's express orders to cause this declaration of liberty of conscience to be read in their churches, refused to comply. They drew up a modest petition to excuse their refusal, which only served to increase the king's resentment and rage. They were cited before the council, and *A. D.* 1687. still adhered to their former resolution with that firmness which is the characteristic of virtue. The attorney-general was ordered to prosecute them for publishing sedition, and abridging the king's prerogative. They were committed prisoners to the Tower, conducted thither amidst the prayers and condolence of an incredible multitude of the populace, who regarded them as sufferers for truth. The day appointed for their trial arrived; this cause was looked upon as the crisis of English freedom; the council managed the debate on both sides with learning and candour; the jury withdrew into a chamber, where they passed the whole night, but next morning returned into court, and declared the bishops

not guilty. The joy of the people, on this occasion, was inexpressible; the whole city, and the country around, seemed at once to catch the shouts of exultation; they even reached the camp, where the king was then sitting at dinner, who heard them with indignation and amazement.

If the bishops testified the readiness of martyrs, in support of their religion, James shewed no less obstinacy in his attempts towards the establishment of his own. Finding the clergy averse to his designs, he next tried what he could do with the army. He thought, if one regiment would promise implicit obedience, their example would soon induce others to the same compliance. He ordered one of the regiments to be drawn up in his presence, and desired that such as were against his late declaration of liberty should lay down their arms. He was surprized to see the whole battalion ground their arms, except two officers and a few Roman catholic soldiers.

Opposition only served to increase the infatuated monarch's zeal; he was continually stimulated by his queen and his priests to proceed rashly onward. But he was particularly urged on by the Jesuit Peters, his confessor, an ambitious and intriguing priest, whom some historians have even accused of being the creature of the prince of Orange, the king's son-in-law, who had long since conceived hopes of seizing the crown. James now, therefore, issued orders for prosecuting all those clergymen who had forborne to read his declaration. He placed one Gifford, a doctor of the Sorbonne, at the head of Magdalen-college, and likewise nominated him to the see of Oxford, lately become vacant. Every member of the church of England now saw their danger; and

whigs and tories united their efforts to oppose it.

William, prince of Orange, had married Mary the daughter of king James. This prince had been early immersed in danger, calamities, and politics; the designs of France, and the turbulence of Holland, had served to sharpen his talents, and given him a propensity for intrigue. This great politician and soldier concealed beneath a phlegmatic appearance, a most violent and boundless ambition; all his actions were levelled at power, while his discourse never betrayed the wishes of his heart. His temper was cold and severe, his genius active and piercing; he was valiant without ostentation, and politic without address; disdain- ing the pleasures, or the elegancies of life, yet eager after the phantom of pre-eminence. He was no stranger to the murmurs of the English, and was resolved to turn them to his interest. He therefore accepted the invitations of the nobility and others, and still more willingly embarked in the cause, as he found the malecontents had concerted their measures with prudence and secrecy.

A fleet was equipped sufficient to transport fifteen thousand troops; and it was at first given out that this armament was designed against France. James, at length, began to see his own errors and the discontents of the people; he would now have retracted his measures in favour of popery, but it was too late; the fleet of the prince was already sailed, and had landed thirteen thousand troops at the village of Broxholme in Torbay.

The expectations of the prince of Orange seemed, at first, to be frustrated; very few Englishmen offered him their services, though the people were, in general, well affected to his design. Slight re-
pulses

pulses were not sufficient to intimidate a general who had, from early youth, encountered adversity; he continued ten days in expectation of being joined by the malecontents without success; but, just when he began to deliberate about reimbarking his forces, he was joined by several persons of consequence, and the country people came flocking to his standard. From this day his numbers began to increase; the nobility, which had composed the court and council of king James, now left their old master to solicit protection from the new.

Lewis XIV. had long foreseen this defection, and had formerly offered the king thirty thousand men for his security. This was then refused by James, by the advice of Sunderland, his favourite, who was secretly in the interest of the prince of Orange. James, however, now requested assistance from France, when it was too late. He wrote in vain to Leopold, emperor of Germany, who only returned for answer, that what he had foreseen had happened. He had some dependance on his fleet, but they were entirely disaffected. In a word, his interests were deserted by all; for he had long deserted them himself. He was at the head of an army of twenty thousand men, and it is possible that, had he led them to the combat without granting them time for deliberation, they might have fought in his favour; but he was involved in a maze of fears and suspicions; the defection of those he most confided in took away his power of deliberation, and his perplexity was increased, when told that the prince of Denmark and Anne, his favourite daughter, had gone over to the prince of Orange. In this exigence he could not repress his tears, and in the agony of his heart

heart was heard to exclaim, *God help me, my own children have forsaken me.*

He now hung over the precipice of destruction ! invaded by one son-in-law, abandoned by another, hated by his subjects, and detested by those who had suffered beneath his cruelty. He assembled the few noblemen who still adhered to his interests, and demanded their advice and assistance. Addressing himself to the earl of Bedford, father to lord Russell, who was beheaded by James's intrigues in the preceding reign, *My lord*, said he, *you are an honest man, have great credit, and can do me signal service.* *Ah, Sir*, replied the earl, *I am old and feeble, I can do you but little service ; but I once had a son that could have assisted you, but he is no more.* James was so struck with this reply, that he could not speak for some minutes.

The king was naturally timid ; and some counsellors about him, either sharing his fears, or bribed by the prince, contributed to increase his apprehensions. They reminded him of the fate of Charles I. and aggravated the turbulence of the people. He was, at length, persuaded to think of flying from a nation he could no longer govern, and of taking refuge at the court of France, where he was sure of finding assistance and protection. Thus instructed, he first sent away his queen, who arrived safely at Calais ; and soon after, disguising himself in a plain dress, he went down to Feverham, and embarked on board a small vessel for France. But his misfortunes still continued to follow him ; the vessel was detained by the common people, who not knowing their sovereign, robbed, insulted, and abused him. He was now persuaded by the earl of Winchelsea to return to London,

London, where he was once more received amidst the acclamations of the people.

The return of James was by no means agreeable to William, though he well knew how to dissimble. It was his interest and his design to increase the forsaken monarch's apprehensions, so as to induce him to fly. He therefore received the news of his return with a haughty air, and ordered him to leave Whitehall, and retire to Richmond. The king remonstrated against Richmond, and desired that Rochester might be appointed as the place of his abode. The prince perceived his intention was to leave the kingdom; nor did one wish for flight more ardently than the other desired him away. The king soon concurred with his designs: after staying but a short time at Rochester, he fled to the sea-side, attended by his natural son the duke of Berwick, where he embarked for France, and arrived in safety, to enjoy, for the rest of life, the empty title of a king, and the appellation of a saint, a title which still flattered him more. There he continued to reside among a people who pitied, ridiculed, and despised him. He enrolled himself in the order of Jesuits; and the court of Rome, for whom he had lost all, repaid him only with indulgences and pasquinades.

From this moment the constitution of England, that had fluctuated for so many ages, was fixed. The nation, represented by its parliament, determined the long contested limits between the king and the people; they prescribed to the prince of Orange the terms by which he was to rule; they chose him for king, jointly with Mary, who was the next Protestant heir to the crown. They were crowned by the titles of William III. and Mary, king and queen of England. The prince saw his
ambition,

ambition, at length, gratified; and his wisdom was repaid with that crown which the folly of his predecessor had given away.

LETTER XLVIII.

THOUGH William was chosen king of England, his power was limited on every side; and the opposition he met with from his parliaments still lessened his authority. His sway in Holland, where he was but the Stadtholder, was far more arbitrary; so that he might, with greater propriety, have been called the King of the United Provinces, and the Stadtholder of England. He was not sufficiently acquainted with the difficulty of governing the nation by which he was elected; he expected in them a people ready to second the views of his ambition in humbling France; but he found them more apt to fear for the invasion of their domestic liberties from himself.

His reign commenced, however, with the same attempt which had been the principal cause of all the disturbances in the preceding reign, and had excluded the monarch from the throne. William was a Calvinist, and naturally averse to persecution. He therefore began by attempting to repeal those laws that enjoined uniformity of worship; and, though he could not entirely succeed in his design, yet a toleration was granted to such dissenters as should take the oaths of allegiance, and hold no private conventicles. The papists also enjoyed the lenity of his government; and, though the laws against them continued to subsist, yet they were seldom put into rigorous execution. What was criminal in James was virtuous in his successor:

James

James only wanted to introduce persecution, by pretending to disown it; William was averse to persecution from principle; and none suffered for religious opinions during his reign.

But, though William was acknowledged in England, Scotland was still undetermined. The parliament of that country, however, soon recognized his authority, and took that opportunity to abolish episcopacy, which had been long disagreeable to the nation. Nothing now remained to the deposed monarch, of all his former dominions, but Ireland. His cause was espoused by all the catholics of that country, who were much more numerous there than those of the protestant persuasion. The king of France, either touched with compassion for his sufferings, or willing to weaken a rival kingdom by promoting its internal dissensions, granted James a fleet and some troops, to assert his claims there. On the seventh day of May this unhappy monarch embarked at Brest, and on the twenty-second arrived at Kinsale. He was received by the catholics of Ireland with open arms. The protestants, who were unanimously attached to king William, had been previously disarmed by Tyrconnel, their lord-lieutenant, and a papist. James made his public entry into Dublin, amidst the acclamations of the inhabitants. He was met by a popish procession, bearing the host, which he publicly adored; and this served to alienate the few protestants of that kingdom, who still adhered to his cause. A small party of that religion were resolved to defend their lives and liberties in the little city of Londonderry. They were besieged by the forces of king James, and suffered all the complicated miseries of war, famine, and bigotted cruelty; but, determined never to
yield,

yield, they rejected capitulation, and always repulsed the besiegers with considerable loss. At length, supplies and succours arriving from England, king James's army thought proper to raise the siege.

A. D. 1689. The cruelties exercised upon the protestants were as shocking as unnecessary; soldiers were permitted to pillage them without redress; and they were compelled to accept base money in exchange for those commodities they were forced to sell. But their sufferings were soon to have a period. The duke of Schomberg was sent over, with assistance; and William himself soon after followed, and landed at Carrickfergus. He was met by numbers of the protestants, who had fled from persecution; and now, at the head of six and thirty thousand men, he was resolved to go in quest of the enemy. Having marched to Dundalk, and then to Ardee, he, at length, came in sight of the Irish army. The river Boyne lay between the two armies, the front of the Irish being secured by a morass and a rising ground. These obstacles were insufficient to prevent the ardour of William, who, when his friend the duke of Schomberg expostulated upon the danger, boldly replied, That a tardy victory would be worse than a defeat. The duke, finding his advice not relished, retired to his tent in a melancholy manner, as if he had a prescience of his own misfortune. Early in the morning, at six o'clock, king William gave orders to pass the river; the army passed in three different places, and the battle began with unusual vigour. The Irish troops, which have been reckoned the best in Europe abroad, have always fought indifferently at home; they fled, after a long resistance, with precipitation, and left the French and
Swiss

Swiss regiments, who came to their assistance, to make the best retreat they could. William led on his horse in person, and contributed, by his activity and vigilance, to secure the victory. James was not in the battle, but stood aloof, during the action, on the hill of Dunmore, surrounded with some squadrons of horse; and, at intervals, was heard to exclaim, when he saw his own troops repulsing the enemy, *O spare my English subjects.* The Irish lost about fifteen hundred men, and the English about one third of that number; but the death of the duke of Schomberg, who was shot as he was crossing the water, seemed to outweigh all the numbers of the enemy. He had been long a soldier of fortune, and fought under almost every power in Europe. His skill in war was unparalleled, and his fidelity equal to his courage. The number of battles in which he had been personally engaged, was said to equal the number of his years; and he died aged eighty-two. James fled, regardless of the safety of his soldiers. William rode round the scene of slaughter, relieving the wounded, as well of the enemy's troops as his own. O Regan, an old Irish captain, was heard to say upon this occasion, That, if the English would exchange generals, the conquered army would fight the battle over again.

This blow totally depressed the hopes of James; he fled to Dublin, advised the magistrates to get the best terms they could from the victor, then set out for Waterford, where he embarked for France, in a vessel prepared for his reception. Had he possessed either conduct or courage, he might still have headed his troops, and fought with advantage; but prudence forsook him with good fortune.

His

His friends were still resolved to second his interests, though he had abandoned them himself. After his retreat, another desperate battle was fought at Aughrim, in which his adversaries were again victorious; Limerick, a strong city in the southern part of the kingdom, still held out in his favour. This city was besieged, and made a brave defence; but, despairing of the king's *A. D. 1691.* fortunes, the garrison, at length, capitulated; the Roman catholics, by this capitulation, were restored to the enjoyment of such liberty in the exercise of their religion, as they had possessed in the reign of Charles II.; and about fourteen thousand of those who had fought in favour of king James, had permission to go over to France, and transports were provided for their reception.

The conquest of Ireland being thus completed, the only hopes of the fugitive king now depended on the assistance of Lewis XIV. who promised to make a descent upon England in his favour. The French king was punctual; he supplied the fugitive monarch with an army consisting of a body of French troops, some English and Scotch refugees, and the Irish regiments which had been transported from Limerick into France, by long discipline, now become excellent soldiers. This army was assembled between Cherbourg and La Hogue; king James commanded it in person; and more than three hundred transports were provided for landing it on the English shore. Tourville, the French admiral, at the head of sixty-three ships of the line, was appointed to favour the descent, and had orders to attack the enemy, if they should attempt to oppose him. All things con-
spired

spired to revive the hopes of the hitherto unfortunate king.

These preparations on the side of France were soon known at the court of England, *A. D. 1692.* and precautions were taken for a vigorous opposition; all the secret machinations of the banished king's adherents were early discovered to the English ministry by spies; and they took proper measures to defeat them. Admiral Ruffel was ordered to put to sea with all possible expedition; and he soon appeared with ninety-nine ships of the line, besides frigates and fire-ships. Both fleets met at La Hogue. On the success of this engagement all the hopes of James depended; but the victory was on the side of the English, and of numbers; the combat continued ten hours, and the pursuit two days; fifteen French men of war were destroyed; and the blow was so decisive, that from that time France seemed to relinquish her claims to the ocean.

James was now reduced to the lowest ebb of despondence; his designs upon England were quite frustrated; nothing was now left his friends but terrors and despair, or the hopes of assassinating the monarch on the throne. These base attempts, as barbarous as they were useless, were not intirely disagreeable to the temper of James: it is said, he encouraged and proposed them; but they all ended in the destruction of their undertakers. He passed the rest of his days at St. Germain, a pensioner on the bounties of Lewis, and assisted by occasional liberalities from his daughter, and friends in England. He died in 1700, at St. Germain. Some pretend that miracles were wrought at his tomb. We have seen few deposed kings that have not died with a reputation for sanctity.

The

The defeat at La Hogue confirmed king William's safety and title to the crown : the Jacobites were now a feeble and a disunited faction ; new parties therefore arose among those who had been friends of the revolution, and William found as much opposition from his parliament at home, as from the enemy in the field. His chief motive for accepting the crown was to engage England more deeply in the concerns of Europe. It had ever been his ambition to humble the French, whom he considered as the most formidable enemies of that liberty which he idolized ; and all his politics lay in making alliances against them. Many of the English, on the other hand, had neither the same animosity against the French, nor the same terrors of their increasing power ; they therefore considered the interests of the nation as sacrificed to foreign connections, and complained, that the war on the continent fell most heavily on them, though they had the least interest in its success. To these motives of discontent was added his partiality to his own countrymen in prejudice of his English subjects, together with his proud reserve and fullen silence, so unlike the behaviour of all their former kings. William heard their complaints with the most phlegmatic indifference ; the interest of Europe alone employed all his attention ; but while he incessantly watched over the schemes of contending kings and nations, he was unmindful of the cultivation of internal polity. Patriotism was ridiculed as an ideal virtue ; the practice of bribing a majority in parliament became universal. The example of the great was caught up by the vulgar ; all principle, and even decency, was gradually banished ; talents lay uncultivated ; and the

the ignorant and profligate were received into favour.

William, upon accepting the crown, was resolved to preserve, as much as he was able, the privileges of a sovereign. He was, as yet, entirely unacquainted with the nature of a limited monarchy, which was not then thoroughly understood in any part of Europe, except in England alone. He therefore often controverted the views of his parliament, and was directed by arbitrary councils. One of the first instances of this was, in the opposition he gave to the bill for triennial parliaments; it had past the two houses, and was sent up to receive the royal assent, which William refused to grant; the commons then voted, that whoever advised the king to this measure, was an enemy to his country. The bill, thus rejected, lay dormant for another season; and, being again brought in, the king found himself obliged, though reluctantly, to comply. The same opposition, and the same success, attended a bill for regulating trials in cases of high treason, by which the accused was allowed a copy of his indictment, and a list of the names of his jury, two days before his trial, together with council to plead in his defence. That no person should be indicted, but upon the oaths of two faithful witnesses. This was one of the most salutary laws that had been long enacted; but, while penal statutes were mitigated on one hand, they were strangely increased by a number of others.

The great business of the parliament, from this period, seemed to consist in restraining corruption, and bringing such to justice, as had grown wealthy from the plunder of the public. The number of laws

laws that were now enacted every session, seemed calculated for the safety of the subject; but, in reality, were symptoms of the universal corruption. The more corrupt the commonwealth, the more numerous are the laws.

William was willing to admit all the restraints they chose to lay on the royal prerogative in England, upon condition of being properly supplied with the means of humbling the power of France. War, and foreign politics, were all he knew, or desired to understand. The sums of money granted him for the prosecution of this war were incredible; and the nation, not contented with furnishing him with such supplies as they were immediately capable of raising, involved themselves in debts, which they have never since been able to discharge. For all this profusion England received in return, the empty reward of military glory in Flanders, and the consciousness of having given the Dutch, whom they saved, frequent opportunities of being ungrateful.

The treaty of Ryswick, at length, put an end to a war, in which England had engaged without interest, and came off without advantage. In the general pacification her interests seemed intirely deserted; and, for all her blood and treasure, the only equivalent she received, was, the king of France's acknowledgment of king William's title to the crown.

The king, now freed from a foreign war, laid himself out to strengthen his authority at home. He conceived hopes of keeping up the forces that were granted him, in time of war, during the continuance of the peace; but he was not a little mortified to find that the commons had passed a vote, that all the forces in English pay, exceeding seven thousand

thousand men, should be forthwith disbanded; and that those retained should be natural English subjects. A standing army was this monarch's greatest delight; he had been bred up in camps, and knew no other pleasure but that of reviewing troops, or dictating to generals. He professed himself therefore entirely displeased with the proposal; and his indignation was kindled to such a pitch, that he actually conceived a design of abandoning the government. His ministers, however, diverted him from this resolution, and persuaded him to consent to passing the bill. Such were the altercations between the king and his parliament; which continued during this reign. He considered his commons as a set of men desirous of power, and consequently resolved upon obstructing all his projects. He seemed but little attached to any party in the house; he veered from whigs to tories, as interest, or immediate exigence, demanded. England he considered as a place of labour, anxiety, and altercation. He used to retire to his seat at Loo in Holland, for those moments which he dedicated to pleasure or tranquillity. It was in this quiet retreat he planned the different successions of Europe, and laboured to undermine the politics of Lewis XIV. his insidious rival in power, and in fame. Against France his resentment was ever levelled, and he had made vigorous preparations for entering into a new war with that kingdom, when death interrupted the execution of his schemes. *A. D. 1701.* He was naturally of a very feeble constitution, and it was now almost exhausted by a life of continual action and care. He endeavoured to conceal the increase of his infirmities, and repair his health by riding. In one of his excursions to Hampton-court, his horse fell

VOL. II. E under

under him, and he himself was thrown off with such violence that his collar-bone was fractured. This, in a robust constitution, would have been a trifling misfortune, but to him it was fatal. Perceiving his end approach, the objects of his former care still lay next his heart; the interests of Europe still filled him with concern. The earl of Albemarle arriving from Holland, he conferred with him in private on the posture of affairs abroad. Two days after, having received the sacrament from archbishop Tennison, he expired, in the fifty-second year of his age, after having reigned thirteen years.

William left behind him the character of a great politician, though he had never been popular; and a formidable general, though he was seldom victorious; his deportment was grave and sullen, nor did he ever shew any fire, but in the day of battle. He despised flattery, yet loved dominion. Greater as the general of Holland, than the king of England; to the one he was a father, to the other a suspicious friend. He scrupled not to employ the engines of corruption to gain his ends; and, while he increased the power of the nation he was brought to govern, he contributed, in some measure, to corrupt their morals.

LETTER XLIX.

THE distresses occasioned by the death of princes are not so great, or so sincere, as the survivors would fondly persuade us. The loss of king William was, at first, thought irreparable; but the prosperity which the kingdom seemed to acquire under his successor, queen Anne, shewed the contrary.

contrary. This princess was the second daughter of king James by his first wife; she was, by the mother's side, descended from chancellor Hyde, afterwards earl of Clarendon; and had been married to the prince of Denmark, before her accession to the crown. She ascended the throne in the thirty-eighth year of her age, having undergone many vicissitudes after the expulsion of her father, and many severe mortifications during the reign of the late king. But, naturally possessed of an even serene temper, she either was insensible of the disrespect shewn her, or had wisdom to conceal her resentment.

She came to the throne with the same hostile disposition toward France, in which the late monarch died. She was wholly guided by the countess of Marlborough, a woman of masculine spirit, and remarkable for intrigue, both in politics and gallantry. This lady advised a vigorous exertion of the English power against France, as she had already marked the earl, her husband, for conducting all the operations both in the cabinet and the field. Thus influenced, the queen took early measures to confirm her allies, the Dutch, with assurances of union and assistance.

Lewis XIV. now grown familiar with disappointment and disgrace, yet still spurring on an exhausted kingdom to second the views of his ambition, expected, from the death of king William, a field open for conquests and glory. The vigilance of his late rival had blasted his laurels, and circumscribed his power; for, even after a defeat, William still was formidable. At the news of his death, therefore, the French monarch could not suppress his joy, and his court at Versailles seemed to have forgotten its usual decorum in the sincerity

of their rapture. But their pleasure was soon to determine; a much more formidable enemy was now rising up to oppose them; a more able warrior, and one backed by the efforts of an indulgent mistress and a willing nation.

Immediately, upon the queen's accession, war was declared against the French king, and that monarch was accused of attempting to unite the crown of Spain to his own dominions, by placing his grandson upon the throne of that kingdom; thus attempting to destroy the equality of power among the states of Europe. This declaration was soon seconded with vigorous efforts; an alliance was formed between the Imperialists, the Dutch, and the English, who contributed more to the support of the war than the other two united. Marlborough was sent over to command the English army, and the allies declared him generalissimo of all their forces. Never was a man better calculated for debate and action than he; serene in the midst of danger, and cool in all the fury of battle. While his countess governed the queen, his intrigues governed the kingdom. An indefatigable warrior while in camp, and a skilful politician in courts; he thus became the most fatal enemy to France that England had produced, since the conquering times of Cressy and Agincourt.

This general had learned the art of war under the famous marshal Turenne, having been a volunteer in his army. He, at that time, went by the name of the *Handsome Englishman*; but Turenne foresaw his future greatness. He gave the first proofs of his wisdom by advancing the subaltern officers, whose merit had hitherto been neglected; he gained the enemy's posts without fighting, ever advancing, and never losing one advantage which

he

he had gained. To this general was opposed, on the side of France, the duke of Burgundy, grandson of the king, a youth more qualified to grace a court, than conduct an army; the marshal Boufflers commanded under him, a man of courage and activity. But these qualifications in both were forced to give way to the superior powers of their adversary; after having been forced to retire by the skilful marches of Marlborough, after having seen several towns taken, they gave up all hopes of acting offensively, and concluded the campaign with resolutions to prosecute the next with greater vigour.

Marlborough, upon his return to London, received the rewards of his merit, being thanked by the house of commons, and created a duke by the queen. The success of one campaign but spurred on the English to aim at new triumphs. Marlborough next season returned to the field, with larger authority, and greater confidence from his former success. He began the campaign by taking Bonne, the residence of the elector of Cologne; he next retook Huys, Limbourg, and became master of all the Lower Rhine. The marshal Villeroi, son to the king of France's governor, and educated with him, was now general of the French army. He was ever a favourite of Lewis, and had shared his pleasures and his campaigns. He was brave, virtuous, and polite; but unequal to the great task of command; and still more so, when opposed to so great a rival.

Marlborough, sensible of the abilities of his antagonist, was resolved, instead of immediately opposing him, to fly to the succour of the emperor, his ally, who loudly requested his assistance, being pressed on every side by a victorious enemy. The

English general, who was resolved to strike a vigorous blow for his relief, took with him about thirteen thousand English troops, traversed extensive countries by hasty marches, arrived at the banks of the Danube, defeated a body of French and Bavarians stationed at Donavert to oppose him, passed the Danube, and laid the dukedom of Bavaria, that had sided with the French, under contribution. Villeroy, who at first attempted to follow his motions, seemed, all at once, to have lost sight of his enemy; nor was he apprized of his route, till he was informed of his successes.

Marshal Tallard prepared, by another route, to obstruct the duke of Marlborough's retreat, with thirty thousand men. He was soon after joined by the duke of Bavaria's forces; so that the French army amounted to a body of sixty thousand disciplined veterans, commanded by the two best reputed generals at that time in France. Tallard had established his reputation by former victories; he was active, penetrating, and had risen by the dint of merit alone. But this ardour often rose to impetuosity; and he was so short-sighted as to be unable to distinguish at the smallest distance. On the other hand, the duke of Marlborough was now joined by the prince Eugene, a general bred up from his infancy in camps, and equal to Marlborough in intrigue and military knowledge. Their talents were congenial; and all their designs seemed to flow but from one source. Their army, when combined, amounted to about fifty-two thousand men; troops that had been accustomed to conquer, and had seen the French, the Turks, and the Russians fly before them. As this battle, both from the talents of the generals, the improvements in the art of war, the number and discipline of the troops,

troops, and the greatness of the contending powers, is reckoned the most remarkable of this century, it demands a more particular detail.

The French were posted on a hill, their right being covered by the Danube, and the village of Blenheim, and commanded by marshal Tallard; their left was defended by a village, and headed by the elector and Marfin, an experienced French general. In the front of their army ran a rivulet, the banks of which were steep, and the bottom marshy. Marlborough and Eugene went together to observe the posture of the French forces. Notwithstanding their advantageous situation, they were resolved to attack them immediately. The battle began between twelve and one in the afternoon. Marlborough, at the head of the English troops, having passed the rivulet, attacked the cavalry of Tallard in the right. This general was at that time reviewing the disposition of his troops in the left; and the cavalry fought for some time without the presence of their general. Prince Eugene, on the left, had not yet attacked the forces of the elector; and it was an hour before he could bring his forces up to the engagement.

Tallard had no sooner understood that his right was attacked by the duke, but he flew to its head. He found the furious encounter already begun, his cavalry thrice repulsed, and rallied as often. He had a large body of forces in the village of Blenheim; he made an attempt to bring them to the charge. They were attacked by a part of Marlborough's forces so vigorously, that, instead of assisting the main body, they could hardly maintain their ground. All the French cavalry, being now attacked in flank, was totally defeated. The English army, thus half victorious, pierced up
 E. 4. between.

between the two bodies of the French, commanded by the marshal and the elector, while at the same time the forces in the village of Blenheim were separated by another detachment. In this terrible situation, Tallard flew to rally some squadrons, but, from his short-sightedness, mistaking a detachment of the enemy for his own, he was taken prisoner by the Hessian troops, who were in English pay. In the mean time, prince Eugene on the left, after having been thrice repulsed, put the enemy into confusion. The rout then became general, and the flight precipitate. The consternation was such that the French soldiers threw themselves into the Danube, without knowing where they fled. The officers lost all their authority; there was no general left to secure a retreat. The allies were now masters of the field of battle, and surrounded the village of Blenheim, where a body of thirteen thousand men had been posted in the beginning of the action, and still kept their ground. These troops, seeing themselves cut off from all communication with the rest of the army, threw down their arms, and surrendered themselves prisoners of war. Thus ended the battle of Blenheim, one of the most complete victories that was ever obtained. Twelve thousand French and Bavarians were slain in the field, or drowned in the Danube; thirteen thousand were made prisoners of war. Of the allies about five thousand men were killed, and eight thousand wounded or taken.

The loss of the battle is imputed to two capital errors committed by marshal Tallard; first weakening the center by detaching such a number of troops to the village of Blenheim, and then suffering the confederates to pass the rivulet, and form unmolested. The next day, when the duke of Marl-

Marlborough visited his prisoner, the marshal paid him the compliment of having overcome the best troops in the world. *I hope, sir,* replied the duke, *you will except those by whom they were conquered.*

A country of an hundred leagues extent fell, by this defeat, into the hands of the victor.

Having thus succeeded beyond his hopes, the duke once more returned to England, where he found the people in a transport of joy; he was welcomed as an hero, who had retrieved the glory of the nation; and the queen, the parliament, and the people were ready to second him in all his designs. The manor of Woodstock was conferred upon him for his services; and the *A. D. 1706.* lord-keeper, in the name of the peers, honoured him with that praise he so well deserved.

The success of the last campaign induced the English to increase their supplies for the next, and the duke had fixed upon the Moselle for the scene of action; but being disappointed by prince Lewis, who promised his assistance, he returned to the Netherlands to oppose Villeroy, who, in his absence, undertook the siege of Liege. Villeroy, having received advice of the duke's approach, abandoned his enterprize, and retreated within his lines. Marlborough was resolved to force them. He led his troops to the charge; after a warm, but short engagement, the enemy's horse were defeated with great slaughter. The infantry being abandoned, retreated in great disorder to an advantageous post, where they again drew up in order of battle. Had the duke been permitted to take advantage of their consternation, as he proposed, it is possible he might have gained a compleat victory: but he was opposed by the Dutch officers, who represented it in such a light to the deputies of the States, that

they refused to consent to its execution. This timidity was highly resented in England, and laid the first foundation of suspecting the Dutch fidelity; they were secretly accused of a desire to protract the war, by which they alone, of all the powers in Europe, were gainers.

While the arms of England were crowned with success in the Netherlands, they were not less fortunate in Spain, where efforts were made to fix Charles, duke of Austria, upon the throne. The greatest part of that kingdom had declared in favour of Philip IV. grandson to Lewis XIV. who had been nominated successor by the late king of Spain's will. We have already seen, that, by a former treaty among the powers of Europe, Charles of Austria was appointed heir to that crown; and this treaty had been guarantied by France herself, who now intended to reverse it in favour of a descendant of the house of Bourbon. Charles therefore entered Spain, assisted by the arms of England; and invited by the Catalonians, who had declared in his favour. He was furnished with two hundred transports, thirty ships of war, nine thousand men, and the Earl of Peterborough, a man of even romantic bravery, was placed at their head.

One of the first exploits of these forces was to take Gibraltar, which had hitherto been deemed impregnable. A ledge of lofty rocks defended it almost on every side by land, and an open and stormy bay took away all security for shipping by sea. A few troops were therefore capable of defending it against the most numerous armies. The security of the garrison proved their ruin. A detachment of eighteen hundred marines were landed upon that neck of level ground which joins it to the

the continent. These were incapable of attempting any thing effectual, and even destitute of hopes of succeeding. A body of sailors, in boats, were ordered to attack an half ruined mole; they took possession of the platform, untterrified by a mine that blew up an hundred men in the air; with the utmost intrepidity they kept their ground, and, being soon joined by other seamen, took a redoubt, between the mole and the town, by storm. The governor was now obliged to capitulate; and the prince of Hesse entered the town, amazed at the success of so desperate an enterprize. This was a glorious and an useful acquisition to the British dominions; their trade to the Mediterranean was thus secured; and they had here a repository capable of containing all things necessary for the repairing of fleets, or the equipment of armies.

Soon after the taking this important garrison, the English fleet, now mistress of the seas, attacked the French admiral, who commanded fifty-two ships of war. After an obstinate contest, the English became victorious; the French fleet sailed away, nor could it be brought again to the engagement, though the losses on either side were equal. This may be reckoned the final effort of France by sea: in all subsequent engagements their chief care was rather to consult means of escape than of victory. Nor yet were the French and Spaniards willing to suffer Gibraltar to be taken, without an effort for reprisal. Philip sent an army to retake it, and France a fleet of thirteen ships of the line; both were equally unsuccessful; part of the fleet was dispersed by a tempest, and another part taken by the English; while the army, having made little or no progress by land, was obliged to abandon the enterprize.

Nor were the English less successful in asserting the title of Charles to the kingdom. Their army was commanded by the earl of Peterborough, one of the most singular and extraordinary men of the age. At fifteen he fought against the Moors in Africa, at twenty he assisted in compassing the Revolution. He now carried on this war in Spain, almost at his own expence; and his friendship for the duke Charles was his strongest motive to undertake it. He was deformed in person, but of a mind the most generous and active that ever inspired an honest bosom. His first attempt in Spain was to besiege Barcelona, a strong city, with a garrison of five thousand men, while his own army amounted to but seven thousand. Never was an attempt more bold, or more fortunate. The operations began by a sudden attack on Fort Monjuice, strongly situated on an hill that commanded the city. The outworks were taken by storm; a shell chanced to fall into the body of the fort, and blew up the magazine of powder; the garrison of the fort was struck with consternation, and surrendered without further resistance. The town still remained unconquered; the English general erected batteries against it, and, in a few days, the governor capitulated. During the interval of capitulation, the Germans and Catalonians in the English army had entered the town, and were plundering all before them. The governor thought himself betrayed: he upbraided the treachery of the general. Peterborough flew among the plunderers, drove them from their prey, and returned soon after coolly to finish the capitulation. The Spaniards were equally amazed at the generosity of the English, and the baseness of their own countrymen, who had led on to the spoil.

The

The conquest of all Valencia succeeded the taking of this important place; the enemy, after a defeated attempt to retake Barcelona, saw themselves deprived of almost every hope; the party of Charles was increasing every day; he became master of Arragon, Carthage, and Grenada; the road to Madrid, their capital city, lay open before him; the earl of Galloway entered it in triumph, and there proclaimed Charles king of Spain, without farther opposition.

The English had scarce time to rejoice at these successes of their arms, when their attention was turned to new victories in Flanders. The duke of Marlborough had early commenced the campaign, and brought an army of eighty thousand men into the field, and still expected reinforcements from Denmark and Prussia. The court of France was resolved to attack him before this junction. Villeroi, who commanded an army consisting of eighty thousand men, near Turenne, had orders to engage. He accordingly drew up his forces in a strong camp; his right was flanked by the river Meuse, his left was posted behind a marsh, and the village of Ramillies lay in the center. Marlborough, who perceived this disposition, drew up his army accordingly. He knew that the enemy's left could not pass the marsh, to attack him, but at a great disadvantage; he therefore weakened his troops on that quarter, and thundered on the center with superior numbers. They stood but a short time in the center, and, at length, gave way on all sides. The horse abandoned their foot, and were so closely pursued, that almost all were cut in pieces. Six thousand men were taken prisoners, and about eight thousand were killed or wounded. This victory was almost as signal as that of Blenheim;

heim; Bavaria and Cologne were the fruits of the one, and all Brabant was gained by the other. The French troops were dispirited, and the city of Paris overwhelmed with consternation, Lewis XIV. who had long been flattered with conquest, was now humbled to such a degree as almost to excite the compassion of his enemies; he intreated for peace, but in vain; the allies carried all before them; and his very capital dreaded the approach of the conquerors. What neither his power, his armies, nor his politics, could effect, a party in England performed; and the dissention between the whigs and the tories saved the dominions of France, that now seemed ready for ruin.

LETTER L.

QUEEN Anne's councils had hitherto been governed by a Whig ministry; they still pursued the schemes of the late king; and, upon republican principles, strove to diffuse freedom throughout Europe. In a government, where the reasoning of individuals, retired from power, generally leads those who command, the designs of the ministry must change, as the people happen to alter. The queen's personal virtues, her successes, her adulation from the throne, contributed all to change the disposition of the nation; they now began to defend hereditary succession, non-resistance, and divine right; they were now become tories, and were ready to controvert the designs of a whig ministry, whenever a leader offered to conduct them to the charge.

These discontents were, in some measure, increased by a meditated union between the two kingdoms;

doms of England and Scotland. The treaty, for this purpose, was chiefly managed by the ministry; and, although it was fraught with numberless benefits to either kingdom, yet it raised the murmurs of both. The English expected nothing from the union of so poor a nation, but a participation of their necessities; they thought it unjust, that, while Scotland was granted an eighth part of the legislature, it yet should be taxed but a fortieth part of the supplies. On the other hand, the Scotch considered that their independency would be quite destroyed, and the dignity of their crown betrayed; they dreaded an increase of taxes, and seemed not much to esteem the advantages of an increased trade. In every political measure there are disadvantages on either side, which may be sufficient to deter the timid, but which a bold legislator disregards. The union, after some *July 22, 1706* struggles, was effected; Scotland was no longer to have a parliament, but to send sixteen peers, chosen from the body of their nobility, and forty-five commoners. The two kingdoms were called by the common name of Great Britain; and all the subjects of both were to enjoy a communication of privileges and advantages.

This measure, which strengthened the vigour of government, by uniting its force, seemed to threaten the enemies of Great Britain with dangers abroad; but the discontents of the nation at home prevented the effects of its newly-acquired power. The tories, now become the majority, were displeased with the whig ministry; they looked with jealousy on the power of the earl of Godolphin and the duke of Marlborough, who had long governed the queen, and lavished the treasures of the nation on conquests more glorious than serviceable.

able. To them the people imputed the burthens under which they now groaned, and others which they had reason to fear. The loss of a battle near Almanza in Spain, where the English army were taken prisoners, under the command of the earl of Galloway, with some other miscarriages, tended to heighten their displeasure, and dispelled the inebriation of former success. The Tories did not fail to inculcate and exaggerate these causes of discontent, while Robert Harley, afterwards earl of Oxford, and Henry St. John, made soon after lord Bolingbroke, secretly fanned the flame.

Harley had lately become a favourite of the queen; the petulance of the duchess of Marlborough, who formerly ruled the queen, had entirely alienated the affections of her mistress. She now placed them upon one Mrs. Masham, who was entirely devoted to lord Oxford. Oxford was possessed of uncommon erudition; he was polite and intriguing; he had insinuated himself into the royal favour, and determined to sap the credit of Marlborough and his adherents. In this attempt he chose, for his second, Bolingbroke, a man of exalted powers of thinking, eloquent, ambitious, and enterprising. Bolingbroke was, at first, contented to act a subordinate character in this meditated opposition; but, soon perceiving the superiority of his own talents, from being an inferior, he was resolved to become lord Oxford's rival. The duke of Marlborough soon perceived their growing power, and resolved to crush it in the beginning. He refused to join in the privy council, while Harley was secretary. Godolphin joined his influence in this measure; and the queen was obliged to appease their resentment, by discharging Harley from his place: Bolingbroke was resolved to share his disgrace,

grace, and voluntarily relinquished his employments.

This violent measure, which seemed, at first, favourable to the whig ministry, laid the first foundation of its ruin; the queen was entirely displeased with the haughty conduct of the duke; and, from that moment, he lost her confidence and affection. Harley was enabled to act now with less disguise, and to take more vigorous measures for the completion of his designs. In him the queen reposed all her trust, though he now had no visible concern in the administration.

The whig party, in this manner, seemed to triumph for some time, till an occurrence, in itself of no great importance, served to shew the spirit of the times. Doctor Sacheverel, a minister of narrow intellects and bigotted principles, had published two sermons, *A. D. 1709.* in which he strongly insisted on the illegality of resisting kings, and enforced the divine origin of their authority; declaimed against the dissenters, and exhorted the church to put on the whole armour of God. There was nothing in the sermons, either nervous, well written, or clear; they owed all their celebrity to the complexion of the times, and are at present justly forgotten. Sacheverel was impeached by the commons, at the bar of the upper house; they seemed resolutely bent upon punishing him; and a day was appointed for trying him before the Lords at Westminster-hall. Meanwhile, the tories, who, one and all, approved his principles, were as violent in his defence as the parliament had been in his prosecution. The eyes of the kingdom were turned upon this extraordinary trial; the queen herself was every day present as a private spectator. The trial lasted some days.

days; and vast multitudes attended him each day, as he went to the hall, shouting, and praying for his success. The body of the people espoused his cause. They destroyed several meeting-houses, and plundered the dwellings of dissenters; and the queen herself could not but relish those doctrines which contributed to extend her prerogative. The lords were divided; they continued undetermined for some time; but, at length, after much obstinate dispute and virulent altercation, Sacheverel was found guilty by a majority of seventeen voices. He was prohibited from preaching, for the term of three years: his two sermons were ordered to be burnt by the hands of the common hangman. The lenity of this sentence was considered, by the Tories, as a victory; and in fact, their faction took the lead all the remaining part of this reign.

The king of France, long persecuted by fortune, and each hour fearing for his capital, once more petitioned for peace. Godolphin and Marlborough, who had, since the beginning of the war, enjoyed the double advantage of extending their glory, and increasing their fortunes, were entirely averse to any negotiation which tended to diminish both. The Tories, on the other hand, willing to humble the general, and his partner Godolphin, were sincerely desirous of a peace, as the only measure to attain their ends. A conference was, at length, begun at Gertruydenberg, under the influence of Marlborough, Eugene, and Zinzendorf, all three entirely averse to the treaty. The French ministers were subjected to every species of mortification; their conduct narrowly watched; their master insulted; and their letters opened. They offered to satisfy every complaint that had given rise to the war; they consented to abandon Philip-

IV. in Spain; to grant the Dutch a large barrier; they even consented to grant a supply towards dethroning Philip; but even this offer was treated with contempt, and at length the conference was broken off, while Lewis resolved to hazard another campaign.

The designs of the Dutch, and the English general, were too obvious not to be seen, and properly explained by their enemies in England. The writers of the tory faction, who were men of the first rank in literary merit, displayed the avarice of the duke, and the self-interested conduct of the Dutch; they insisted, that while England was exhausting her strength in foreign conquests, she was losing her liberty at home; that her ministers were not contented with sharing the plunder of an impoverishing state, but were resolved upon destroying its liberties also. To these complaints were added the real pride of the then prevailing ministry, and the insolence of the duchess of Marlborough, who hitherto had possessed more real power than the whole privy-council united. Mrs. Masham, who had first been recommended to the Queen's favour by the duchess, now fairly supplanted her patroness; and, by a steady attention to please the queen, had gained all that confidence which she had reposed in her former confidante. It was too late that the duchess perceived this alienation of the queen's favour, and now began to think of repairing it by demanding an audience of her majesty, in order to vindicate her character from every suspicion: but formal explanations ever widen the breach.

Mr. Hill, brother to the new favourite, was appointed by the Queen to be colonel of a regiment; this the duke of Marlborough could by no means approve.

approve. He expostulated with his sovereign; he retired in disgust; the queen, by a letter, gave him leave to dispose of the regiment as he should think proper; but, before it came to his hands, he had sent a letter to the queen, desiring she would permit him to retire from his employments. This was the conjuncture which the tories had long wished for, and which the queen herself was internally pleased with. She now perceived herself set free from an arbitrary combination, by which she had been long kept in dependence. The earl of Godolphin, the duke's son-in-law, was divested of his office; and the treasury submitted to Harley, the antagonist of his ambition. Lord Somers was dismissed, from being president of the council, and the earl of Rochester appointed in his room. In a word, there was not one whig left in any office of state except the duke of Marlborough; he retained his employments for a short time, unsupported and alone, an object of envy and factious reproach, till at length he found his cause irretrievable, and was obliged, after trying another campaign, to resign, as the rest of his party had done before.

As war seemed to have been the desire of the whig party, so peace seemed to have been that of the tories. Through the course of English history, France seems to have been the peculiar object of the hatred of the whigs, and continual war with that nation has been their aim. On the contrary, the tories have been found to regard that nation, with no such opposition of principle; and a peace with France has generally been the result of a tory administration. For some time, therefore, a negotiation for peace had been carried on between the court of France and the new ministers, who had

had a double aim in this measure; namely, to mortify the Whigs and the Dutch, and to free their country from a ruinous war which had all the appearance of becoming habitual to the constitution.

LETTER LI.

THE conferences for peace were first opened at London; and some time after the queen sent the earl of Strafford as ambassador *A. D.* 1712. into Holland, to communicate the proposals which the French king had made towards the re-establishment of the general tranquillity. The spirit of the times was now changed; Marlborough's aversion to such measures could no longer retard the negotiation; lord Strafford obliged the Dutch to name plenipotentiaries, and to receive those of France. The treaty began at Utrecht; but as all the powers concerned in this conference, except France and England, were averse to every accommodation, their disputes served rather to retard than accelerate a pacification. The English ministry, however, had foreseen and provided against those difficulties. Their great end was to free the subjects from a long unprofitable war, a war where conquest could add nothing to their power, and a defeat might be prejudicial to internal tranquillity. As England had borne the chief burthen of the war, it was but just to expect that it would take the lead in dictating the terms of peace. There were, however, three persons of very great interest and power, who laboured, by every art, to protract the negotiation; those were the duke of Marlborough, Prince Eugene, and

and Heinfius the Dutch grand pensionary. Prince Eugene even came over to London, in order to retard the progress of a peace, which seemed to interrupt his career of glory; he found at court such a reception as was due to his merits and fame; but, at the same time, such a repulse as the proposals he made seemed to deserve.

This negotiation at London failing of effect, the allies practised every artifice to intimidate the queen, and blacken the character of her ministers; to raise and continue a dangerous ferment among the people, to obstruct her councils and divulge her designs. Her ministers were very sensible of their present dangerous situation; they perceived her health was daily impairing, and her successor countenanced the opposite faction. In case of her death, they had nothing to expect but prosecution and ruin, for obeying her commands; their only way therefore was to give up their present employments, or hasten the conclusion of a treaty, the utility of which would be the best argument with the people in their favour. The peace therefore was hastened; and this haste, in some measure, relaxed the ministers obstinacy, in insisting upon such terms and advantages as they had a right to demand. Seeing that nothing was to be expected from the concurrence of the allies, the courts of London and Versailles resolved to enter into a private treaty, in which such terms might be agreed on as would enable both courts to prescribe terms to the rest of the contending powers.

In the mean time the duke of Marlborough having been deposed from his office of general, the command of the English army in Flanders was given to the duke of Ormond; but, at the same time, private orders were given him not to
act

act with vigour against an enemy, which was upon the point of being reconciled by more mild methods of treatment. The allies, thus deprived of the assistance of the English, still continued their animosity, and were resolved to continue the war separately; they had the utmost confidence in prince Eugene, their general; and, though lessened by the defection of the British forces, they were still superior to those of the enemy, which were commanded by marshal Villars, a man who seemed to possess all the great qualities, and all the foibles of his country, in a supreme degree; valiant, generous, alert, lively, boastful, and avaricious. The loss of the British forces was soon severely felt in the allied army. Villars attacked a separate body of their troops incamped at Denain, under the command of the earl of Albemarle. Their intrenchments were forced, and seventeen battalions either killed or taken, the earl himself, and all the surviving officers, being made prisoners of war.

These successes of marshal Villars served to hasten the treaty of Utrecht. The British ministers at the congress, responsible at once for their conduct to their queen, their country, and all Europe, neglected nothing that might have been serviceable either to the allies, or that might conduce to the public safety. They first stipulated that Philip V. who had been settled on the throne of Spain, should renounce all right to the crown of France, the union of two such powerful kingdoms being thought dangerous to the liberties of the rest of Europe. They covenanted that the duke of Berry, his brother, the presumptive heir to the crown of France, after the death of the dauphin, should also renounce his right to the crown

crown of Spain, in case he became king of France. The duke of Orleans was to make the same resignation. To oblige men thus to renounce their rights might have been injustice; but, for every good acquired, some inconvenience must be endured; these resignations, in some measure, served to calm the world tempestured up by long war, and have since become the basis of the law of nations, to which Europe professes present submission.

By this treaty the duke of Savoy had the island of Sicily, with the title of King, with Fenestrelles, and other places on the continent; which increase of power seemed, in some measure, drawn from the spoils of the French monarchy. The Dutch had that barrier granted them, which they so long sought after; and, if the house of Bourbon seemed stripped of some dominions, in order to enrich the duke of Savoy, on the other hand, the house of Austria was taxed to supply the wants of the Hollanders, who were put in possession of the strongest towns in Flanders. With regard to England, its glory and interests were secured. They caused the fortifications of Dunkirk to be demolished, and its port to be destroyed. Spain gave up all right to Gibraltar and the Island of Minorca. France resigned Hudson's Bay, Nova-Scotia, and Newfoundland; but they were left in possession of Cape-Breton, and the liberty of drying their fish upon the shore. Among the articles which were glorious to the English, it may be observed, that the setting free those who had been confined in the French prisons for professing the protestant religion, was not the least. It was stipulated, that the emperor should possess the kingdom of Naples, the duchy of Milan, and the Spanish Netherlands; that the king of Prussia

should have Upper Gueldre; and a time was fixed for the emperor's acceding to these resolutions, for he had hitherto obstinately refused to assist at the negotiation. Thus it appears, that the English ministry did justice to all the world; but their country refused it to them; they were branded with all the terms of infamy and reproach by the whig party, and accused of having given up the privileges and rights which England had to expect. Each party reviled the other in turn; the kingdom was divided into opposite factions, both so violent in the cause, that the truth, which both pretended to espouse, was attained by neither; both were virulent, and both wrong. These commotions, in some measure, served still more to impair the queen's health. One fit of sickness succeeded another; nor did the consolation of her ministry serve to allay her anxieties; for they now had fallen out among themselves, the council-chamber being turned into a theatre for the most bitter altercations. Oxford advised a reconciliation with the whigs, whose resentment he now began to fear, as the queen's health appeared to be impaired. Bolingbroke, on the other hand, affected to set the whigs at defiance; professed a warm zeal for the church, and mixed flattery with his other assiduities. Bolingbroke prevailed; lord Oxford, the treasurer, was removed from his employment, and retired, meditating schemes of revenge, and new projects of re-establishment. His fall was so sudden, and so unexpected, that no plan was adopted for supplying the vacancy occasioned by his disgrace. All was confusion at court; and the queen had no longer force to support the burthen; she sunk into a state of insensibility, and thus found refuge from anxiety in lethargic slumber. Every

method was contrived to rouse her from this state, but in vain; her physicians despaired of her life. The privy-council assembled upon this occasion; the dukes of Somerset and Argyll, being informed of the desperate state in which she lay, entered that assembly without being summoned; the members were surpris'd at their appearance; but the duke of Shrewsbury thanked them for their readiness to give their assistance at such a critical juncture, and desired them to take their places. They now took all necessary precautions for securing the succession in the house of Hanover, sent orders to the heralds at arms, and to a troop of life-guards to be in readiness to mount, in order to proclaim the Elector of Brunswick King of Great Britain.

On the thirtieth of July the queen seemed somewhat relieved by medicines, rose from her bed, and, about eight, walked a little; when, casting her eyes on the clock that stood in her chamber, she continued to gaze for some time. One of the ladies in waiting asked her what she saw there more than usual; to which the queen only answered by turning her eyes upon her with a dying look. She was soon after seized with a fit of the apoplexy, from which however she was relieved by the assistance of Doctor Mead. In this state of stupefaction she continued all night; she gave some signs of life between twelve and one next day, but expired the next morning, *August 1714*, a little after seven o'clock, having lived forty-nine years five months and six days; and having reigned more than twelve years with honour, equity and applause. This princess was rather amiable than great, rather pleasing than beautiful; neither her capacity nor learning were remarkable. Like all those of her family, she

seemed

seemed rather fitted for the private duties of life than a public station; a pattern of conjugal affection, a good mother, a warm friend, and an indulgent mistress. During her reign none suffered on the scaffold for treason; so that after a long succession of faulty or cruel kings, she shines with particular lustre. In her ended the line of the Stewarts; a family, the misfortunes and misconducts of which are not to be paralleled in history; a family who, less than men themselves, seemed to expect from their followers more than manhood in their defence; a family demanding rather our pity than assistance, who never rewarded their friends, nor avenged them of their enemies.

LETTER LI.

THE nearer we approach to our own times, in this survey of English history, the more important every occurrence becomes; our own interests are blended with those of the state; and the accounts of public welfare are but the transcript of private happiness. The two parties which had long divided the kingdom, under the names of whig and tory, now seemed to alter their titles; the whigs being styled Hanoverians, and the tories branded with the appellation of Jacobites. The former, desired to be governed by a king who was a protestant, though a foreigner; the latter, by a monarch of their own *A. D. 1714.* country, though a papist. Of the two inconveniences, however, that seemed the least, where religion seemed to be in no danger; and the Hanoverians prevailed.

The popish Jacobites had been long flattered

with the hopes of seeing the succession altered by the call of Oxford; but by the premature death of the queen, all their expectations at once were blasted; the diligence and activity of the privy-council, in which the Hanoverian interest prevailed, completed their confusion, and they now found themselves without any leader to give consistency to their designs; and force to their councils. Upon recollection they saw nothing so eligible as flattery and submission; they hoped much from the assistance of France, and still more from the vigour of the pretender. I should not have forgot-
 Pursuant to the act of succession, George II. son of Ernest Augustus, first Elector of Brunswick, and Sophia, grand-daughter to James I. ascended the British throne. His mature age, being now fifty-four years old; his sagacity and experience, his numerous alliances, the general peace of Europe, all contributed to his support, and promised a peaceable and happy reign. His virtues, though not shining, were solid; he was of a very different disposition from the Stuart family, whom he succeeded; they were known to a proverb for leaving their friends in distress; George, on the contrary, soon after his arrival in England, used to say, *My maxim is never to abandon my friends; to do justice to all the world; and to fear no man.* To these qualifications he joined great application to business; but generally studied more the interests of those subjects he had left behind, than of those he came to govern.
 The king first landed at Greenwich, where he was received by the duke of Northumberland, and the Lords of the Regency. From the landing-place he walked to his house in the Park, accompanied by a great number of the nobility, and other

other persons of distinction, who had the honour to kiss his hand as they approached. When he retired to his bed-chamber, he sent for those of the nobility who had distinguished themselves by their zeal for his succession; but the duke of Ormond, the lord chancellor, and lord Trevor, were not of the number; lord Oxford too, the next morning, was received with marks of disapprobation; and none but the whig party were admitted into any share of confidence. The king of a faction is but the sovereign of half his subjects; of this, however, the monarch I speak of did not seem sensible; it was his misfortune, as well as that of the nation, that he was hemmed round by men who soured him with all their interests and prejudices; none now but the violent in faction were admitted into employment; and the whigs, while they pretended to secure for him the crown, were, with all possible diligence, abridging the prerogative. An instantaneous and total change was effected in all the offices of honour and advantage. The whigs governed the senate, and the court disposed of all places at pleasure; whom they would they oppressed; and bound the lower orders of people with new and severe laws; and this they called liberty.

These partialities, and this oppression, soon raised discontents throughout the kingdom. The clamour of the church's being in danger was revived; jealousies were harboured; and dangerous tumults raised in every part of the country. The party cry was, Down with the whigs; Sacheverel for ever. During these commotions in the pretender's favour, this prince himself continued a calm spectator on the continent, now and then sending over his emissaries to inflame the disturbances, to disperse

his ineffectual manifestoes, and to delude the unwary. Copies of a printed address were sent to the dukes of Shrewsbury, Marlborough, Argyle, and other noblemen of the first distinction, vindicating the Pretender's right to the crown, and complaining of the injustice that was done him by receiving a foreigner. Yet, for all this, he still continued to profess the truest regard to the catholic religion; and, instead of concealing his sentiments on that head, gloried in his principles. It was the being a papist which had dispossessed his father of the throne; and surely the son could never hope to gain a crown by the very methods in which it was lost; but an insatiation seemed for ever to attend the family.

However odious, at that time, the popish superstitions were to the people in general, yet the opinions of the dissenters seemed still more displeasing. Religion was mingled with all political disputes. The high-church party complained, that, under a whig administration, impiety and heresy daily gained ground; that the prelates were at once negligent of religious concerns, and warm in pursuit of temporal blessings. A book written by doctor Samuel Clarke, in favour of Socinianism, was strictly reprehended; the disputes among the churchmen rose to such a height that the ministry was obliged to interpose; and the clergy received orders to finish such debates, and to intermeddle in affairs of state no longer. Nothing, however, could be more impolitic in a state, than to prohibit the clergy from disputing with each other; by this means they become more animated in the cause of religion; and this may be asserted, that whatever side they defend, they become wiser and better, as they carry on the cause. To silence
their

their disputes is to lead them into negligence; if religion be not kept up by opposition, it falls to the ground, nor longer becomes an object of public concern. Government, if they again, should never silence dispute, and should never side with either disputant.

A new parliament was now called, in which the whigs had by far the majority; all prepossessed with the strongest aversion to the Tories, and led on by the king himself, who made no secret of his displeasure. Upon their first meeting, he informed them, that the branches of the revenue granted for the support of civil government, were not sufficient for that purpose; and apprized them of the machinations of the pretender, and intimated, that he expected their assistance in punishing such as had endeavoured to deprive him of that blessing which he most valued, the affection of his people. As the houses were then disposed, this served to give them the alarm; and they outwent even the most sanguine expectations of the most audacious ministry.

Their resentment began with arraigning Lord Bolingbroke of high-treason, and other high crimes and misdemeanors. To this it was objected by one of the members of the house of commons, that nothing in the allegations laid to his charge amounted to high-treason. To this there was no reply given; but, Lord Coningsby standing up, The chairman, said he, *has impeached the head; but I impeach the head; he has impeached the fabulist, and I the master. I impeach Robert earl of Oxford, and earl Mortimer, of high treason, and other crimes and misdemeanors.* When therefore this nobleman appeared the next day in the house of Lords, he was avoided, by his brother peers, as infectious.

he, whose favour had been but a little before so earnestly sought after, was now rejected and contemned. When the articles were read against him in the house of peers, some debates arose as to the nature of his indictment, which, however, were carried by his adversaries, and the articles of impeachment approved by the house: he was therefore again impeached at the bar of the house of lords; and a motion was made that he might lose his seat and be committed to close custody. The earl, now seeing a furious spirit of faction raised against him, and aiming at his head, was not wanting to himself, upon this emergency, but spoke to the following purpose: *I am accused, says he, for having made a peace, a peace which, bad as it is now represented, has been approved by two successive parliaments. For my own part, I always acted by the immediate directions and command of the queen my mistress, and never offended against any known law. I am justified in my own conscience, and unconcerned for the life of an insignificant old man. But I cannot, without the highest ingratitude, remain unconcerned for the best of queens; obligations bind me to vindicate her memory. My lords, if ministers of state, acting by the immediate commands of their sovereign, are afterwards to be made accountable for their proceedings, it may one day or other, be the case of all the members of this august assembly. I do not doubt therefore, that, out of regard to yourselves, your lordships, will give me an equitable hearing; and I hope, that in the prosecution of this inquiry it will appear, that I have merited, not only the indulgence, but also the favour of this government. My lords, I am now to take my leave of your lordships, and of this honourable house, perhaps, for ever. I shall lay down my life with*

pleasure,

pleasure, in a cause favoured by my late dear royal mistress. And, when I consider that I am to be judged by the justice, honour, and virtue of my peers, I shall acquiesce, and retire with great content. And, my Lords, God's will be done. On his return from the house of lords to his own house, where he was, for that night, permitted to go, he was followed by a great multitude of people, crying out, High-church, Ormond, and Oxford for ever. Next day he was brought to the bar, where he received a copy of his articles, and was allowed a month to prepare his answer. Though doctor Mead declared, that if the earl should be sent to the Tower, his life would be in danger, it was carried that he should be sent there; whither he was attended by a prodigious concourse of people, who did not scruple to exclaim against his prosecutors. Tumults grew more frequent; and this only served to increase the severity of the legislature. An act was made, decreeing, that if any persons, to the number of twelve, unlawfully assembled, should continue together one hour, after being required to disperse by a justice of peace, or other officer, and heard the proclamation against riots read in public, they should be deemed guilty of felony, without benefit of the clergy. An act of this kind carries its own comment with it; legislators should ever be averse to enacting such laws as leave the greatest room for abuse.

A committee was now appointed to draw up articles of impeachment, and prepare evidence against him and the other impeached lords; he was confined in the Tower, and there remained for two years; during which A. D. 1715: time the kingdom was in a continual ferment, several other lords, who had broke out into actual

rebellion, and were taken in arms, being executed for treason; the ministry seemed weary of executions; and he, with his usual foresight, presented, upon this occasion, a petition for coming to his trial. A day was therefore assigned him. The commons appointed a committee to enquire into the state of the earl's impeachment, and demanded a longer time to prepare for the trial. The truth is, they had now begun to relax in their former asperity; and the intoxication of party was not quite so strong as when he had been first committed. At the appointed time the peers repaired to the court in Westminster-hall, where lord Cowper presided as lord steward. The commons were assembled; and the king and royal family assisted at the solemnity. The prisoner was brought from the Tower, and his articles of impeachment read, with his answers and the replies of the commons. Sir Joseph Jekyl, one of the agents for the commons, standing up to enforce the first article of his lordship's accusation, one of the lords adjourning the house, observed, that much time would be consumed in going through all the articles of the impeachment; that nothing more remained than for the commons to make good the two articles of high treason contained in his charge; and that this would at once determine the trial. His advice was agreed to by the lords; but the commons delivered a paper containing their reasons for asserting it as their undoubted right to carry on the impeachment in the manner they thought most conducive to their aim. On the other hand, the house of lords insisted on their former resolution, considering it as the privilege of every judge to hear each cause in the manner he thinks most fitting. The dispute grew still more violent; a

message

message was at length sent to the commons, intimating that the lords intended to proceed immediately to the earl of Oxford's trial; and, soon after repairing to the hall of justice, they took their places. The commons, however, did not think fit to appear; and the earl, having waited a quarter of an hour at the bar, was dismissed for want of accusers. To this dispute, perhaps, he owed his safety, though it is probable they would have acquitted him of high-treason, as none of his actions could justly suffer such an imputation. With the same acrimony prosecutions were carried on against lord Bolingbroke and the duke of Ormond; but they found safety in flight.

Such vindictive proceedings as these naturally excited indignation; the people groaned to behold a few great ones close up all the avenues to royal favour, and rule the nation with rigour and partiality. In Scotland the discontent broke forth, at length, into the flames of rebellion. The earl of Mar, assembling three hundred of his own vassals, in the Highlands of Scotland, proclaimed the pretender at Castletown, and set up his standard at Brae Mar, on the sixth day of September; then assuming the title of lieutenant-general of the pretender's forces, he exhorted the people to take arms in defence of their lawful sovereign. But these preparations were weak, and ill-conducted; all the designs of the rebels were betrayed to the government, the beginning of every revolt repressed, the western countries prevented from rising, and the most prudent precautions taken to keep all suspected persons in custody, or in awe. The earl of Derwentwater, and Mr. Foster, took the field near the borders of Scotland; and, being joined by some gentle-

men, proclaimed the pretender. Their first attempt was to seize upon Newcastle, in which they had many friends; but they found the gates shut upon them, and were obliged to retire to Hexam; while general Carpenter, having assembled a body of dragoons, resolved to attack them before their numbers were increased. The rebels had two methods of acting with success, either marching immediately into the western parts of Scotland, and there joining general Gordon, who commanded a strong body of Highlanders, or of crossing the Tweed, and attacking general Carpenter, whose forces did not exceed nine hundred men. From their usual insatiation neither of these schemes were put into execution; for taking the route another way, they left general Carpenter on one side, and resolved to penetrate into England by the western border. They accordingly advanced without either foresight or design, as far as Preston, where they first heard the news that general Wills was marching at the head of six regiments of horse, and a battalion of foot, to attack them. They now therefore began to raise barricadoes, and to put the place in a posture of defence, repelling at first the attack of the king's army with some success. Next day, however, general Wills was reinforced by the troops under Carpenter, and the rebels were invested on all sides. Foster, their general, sent colonel Oxburgh with a trumpet to the English commander, to propose a capitulation. This, however, general Wills refused, alledging that he would not treat with rebels; and that all they could expect was, to be spared from immediate slaughter. These were hard terms; but they were obliged to submit. They accordingly laid down their arms, and were put under a strong

strong guard. Their leaders were secured, and led through London prisoned, and bound together, while the common men were confined at Chester and Liverpool.

While these unhappy circumstances attended the rebels in England, the earl of Mar's forces, in the mean time, increased to the number of ten thousand men, and he had made himself master of the whole county of Fife. Against him the Duke of Argyll set out for Scotland, as commander in chief of the forces in North Britain; and, assembling some troops in Lothian, returned to Stirling with all possible expedition. The earl of Mar, being informed of this, at first retreated; but being joined soon after by some clans under the earl of Seaforth, and others under general Gordon, who had signalized himself in the Russian service, he resolved to march forward towards England. The duke of Argyll, apprized of his intention, and being joined by some regiments of dragoons from Ireland, determined to give him battle in the neighbourhood of Dumblain, though his forces were by no means so numerous as those of the rebel army. In the morning therefore of the same day on which the Preston rebels had surrendered, he drew up his forces, which did not exceed three thousand five hundred men, but found himself greatly outflanked by the enemy. The duke therefore perceiving the enemy making attempts to surround him, was obliged to alter his disposition; which, on account of the scarcity of general officers, was not done so expeditiously as to be all formed before the rebels began the attack. The left wing therefore of the duke's army fell in with the center of the enemy, and supported the first charge without shrinking. This wing seemed, for a short time, victorious,

victorious, as they killed the chief leader of part of the rebel army. But Glengary, who was second in command, undertook to inspire his intimidated forces; and, waving his bonnet, cried out several times, *Revenge*. This animated his men to such a degree, that they followed him close to the muzzles of the muskets, pushed aside the bayonets with their targets, and with their broad-swords did great execution. A total rout of that wing of the royal army ensued, and general Witham, their commander, flying full speed to Stirling, gave out, that all was lost. In the mean time the duke of Argyle, who commanded in person on the right, attacked the left of the enemy, and drove them before him for two miles, though they often faced about, and attempted to rally. The duke having thus entirely broke the left, and pushed them over the river Allen, returned to the field, where he found that part of the rebel army which had been victorious; but, instead of renewing the engagement, both armies continued to gaze at each other, neither caring to attack; till towards evening both sides drew off, each boasting of victory. Which ever might claim the triumph, it must be owned, that all the honour, and all the advantages of the day, belonged only to the duke of Argyle. It was sufficient for him to have interrupted the enemies progress; and delay was to them a defeat. The earl of Mar therefore soon found his disappointments and losses increase. The castle of Inverness, of which he was in possession, was delivered up to the king by lord Lovat, who had hitherto appeared in the interest of the pretender. The marquis of Tullibardine left the earl to defend his own country; and many of the clans, seeing no likelihood of coming soon to a second engagement, returned.

returned home, for an irregular army is much easier led to battle, than induced to bear the fatigues of a campaign.

The pretender might now be convinced of the vanity of his expectations, in imagining that the whole country would rise up in his cause. His affairs were actually desperate: yet, with the usual infatuation of the family, he resolved to hazard his person among his friends in Scotland, at a time when such a measure was totally useless. Passing therefore through France in disguise, and embarking in a small vessel at Dunkirk, he arrived on the twenty-second day of December, on the coasts of Scotland, with only six gentlemen in his retinue. Upon his arrival in Aberdeen, he was solemnly proclaimed, and soon after made his public entry into Dundee. In two days more, he came to Scoon, where he intended to have the ceremony of his coronation performed. He ordered thanksgivings for his safe arrival, enjoined the ministers to pray for him in the churches; and, without the smallest share of power, went through all the ceremonies of royalty, which were, at such a juncture, perfectly ridiculous. After this unimportant parade, he resolved to abandon the enterprize with the same levity with which it had been undertaken, and embarked again for France, together with the earl of Mar, and some others, in a small ship that lay in the harbour of Montrose; and, in five days, arrived at Gravelin. General Gordon, who was left commander in chief of the forces, with the assistance of the earl-marshal, proceeded with them to Aberdeen, where he secured three vessels to sail northward, which took on board the persons who intended to make their escape to the continent. In this manner the rebellion was suppressed; but the fury

fury of the victors did not seem in the least to abate with success. The law was now put in force, with all its terrors; and the prisons of London were crowded with those deluded wretches, whom the ministry shewed no disposition to spare. The commons, in their address to the crown, declared they would prosecute in the most vigorous manner the authors of the rebellion; and their resolutions were as speedy as their measures were vindictive. The earls of Derwentwater, Nithsdale, Carnwarth, and Wintown, the lords Widdrington, Kenmuir, and Nairn, were impeached. The *habeas corpus* act was suspended; and the rebel lords, upon pleading guilty, received sentence of death. Nothing could soften the privy council; the house of lords even presented an address to the throne for mercy, but without effect. Orders were dispatched for executing the earls of Derwentwater and Nithsdale, and the viscount Kenmuir, immediately; the others were respite^d for three weeks longer. Nithsdale, however, escaped in woman's cloath^s, which were brought him by his mother, the night before his intended execution. Derwentwater and Kenmuir were brought to the scaffold on Tower-hill, at the hour appointed. Both underwent their sentence with calmness and intrepidity, pined by all seemingly less moved themselves than the spectators.

An act of parliament was also made for trying the private prisoners in London, and not in Lancashire, where they were taken in arms; which proceeding was, in some measure, an alteration of the ancient constitution of the kingdom; when Foster, Mackintosh, and several others were found guilty. Foster, however, escaped from Newgate, and reached the continent in safety; and some time after

after, also, Mackintosh, with some others, forced their way, having mastered the keeper and turn-key, and disarmed the sentinel. Four or five were hanged, drawn, and quartered; among whom was William Paul, a clergyman, who professed himself a true and sincere member of the church of England, but not of that schismatical church whose bishops had abandoned their king. Such was the end of a rebellion, probably first inspired by the rage of the new whig ministry and parliament. In running through the vicissitudes of human trans-actions, we too often find both sides culpable; and so it was in this case. The royal party acted under the influence of partiality, rigour, and prejudice, gratified private animosity under the mask of public justice, and in their pretended love of freedom, forgot humanity. On the other hand, the pretender's party aimed not only at subverting the government, but the religion of the kingdom; bred a papist himself, he confided only in counsellors of his own persuasion; and most of those who adhered to this cause were men of indifferant morals, or bigotted principles. Clemency, however, in the government at that time, would probably have extinguished all the factious spirit which has hitherto disturbed the peace of this country, for it has ever been the character of the English, that they are more easily led than driven into loyalty.

LETTER LIII.

IN a government, so very complicated as that of England, it must necessarily change from itself, in a revolution of even a few years, as some of
its

its weaker branches acquire strength, or its stronger decline. At this period, the rich and noble seemed to possess a greater share of power than they had done for some ages preceding; the house of commons became each day a stronger body, at once more independent on the crown and the people. It was now seen that the rich could at any time buy their election; and that while their laws governed the poor, they might be enabled to govern the law. The rebellion was now extinguished; and the severities which justice had inflicted, excited the discontent of many, whose humane passions were awakened as their fears began to subside. This served as a pretext for continuing the parliament, and repealing the act by which they were to be dissolved at the expiration of every third year. An act of this nature, by which a parliament thus extended their own power, was thought, by many, the ready means of undermining the constitution; for if they could with impunity extend their continuance for seven years, which was the time proposed, they could also for life continue their power; but this, it was observed, was utterly incompatible with the spirit of legislation. The bill, however, passed both houses; all objections to it were considered as disaffection; and, in a short time, it received the royal sanction. The people might murmur at this encroachment; but it was now too late for redress.

Domestic concerns being thus adjusted, the king began to turn his thoughts to his Hanoverian dominions, and determined upon a voyage to the continent. Nor was he without his fears for his dominions there, as Charles XII. of Sweden, professed the highest displeasure at his having entered into a confederacy against him in his absence.

Having

Having therefore passed through Holland to Hanover, in order to secure his German territories, he entered into a treaty with the Dutch and the regent of France, by which they promised mutually to assist each other, in case of invasion; but the death of the Swedish monarch, who was killed by a cannon-ball at the siege of Frederickstadt, soon put an end to his disquietudes from that quarter. However, his majesty, to secure himself as far as alliances could add to his safety, entered into various negotiations with the different powers of Europe; some were brought to accede by money, others by promises. Treaties of this kind seldom give any real security; they may be considered as mere political playthings; they amuse for a while, and then are thrown neglected by, never more to be heard of, as nothing but its own internal strength or situation can guard a country from insult.

Among other treaties concluded with such intentions, was that called the *Quadruple Alliance*. It was agreed upon between the emperor, France, England, and Holland, that the emperor should renounce all pretensions to the crown of Spain, and exchange Sardinia for Sicily with the Duke of Savoy. That the succession to the duchies of Tuscany, Parma, and Placentia, should be settled on the queen of Spain's eldest son, in case the present possessors should die without male issue. This treaty was by no means favourable to the interests of England, as it interrupted the commerce with Spain; and as it destroyed the balance of power in Italy, by throwing too much into the hands of Austria. However, England fitted out a strong squadron in order to bring Spain to terms, if that kingdom should insist upon its rights in Italy. The war between the emperor and king of Spain was
actually

actually begun in that country; and the mediation of the king of England was rejected, as partial and unjust. It was therefore resolved by the court of London to support its negotiations with the strongest reasons; namely those of war. Sir George Byng sailed to Naples with twenty-two ships of the line, where he was received as a deliverer, that city having been under the utmost terrors of an invasion from Spain. Here the English admiral received intelligence, that the Spanish army, amounting to thirty thousand men, had landed in Sicily; wherefore he immediately determined to sail thither, fully resolved to pursue the Spanish fleet. Upon doubling Cape Faro, he perceived two small Spanish vessels, and pursuing them closely, they led him to their main fleet, which, before noon, he perceived in line of battle, amounting, in all, to twenty-seven sail. At sight of the English, the Spanish fleet, though superior in numbers, attempted to sail away, as the English had, for some time, acquired such expertness in naval affairs, that no other nation would venture to face them, except with manifest disadvantage. The Spaniards seemed distracted in their councils, and acted with extreme confusion; they made a running fight; but notwithstanding what they could do, all but three were taken. The admiral, during this engagement, acted with equal prudence and resolution; and the king wrote him a letter with his own hand, approving his conduct. This victory necessarily produced the resentment and complaints of the Spanish ministers at all the courts of Europe, which induced England to
A. D. 1718. declare war with Spain; and the regent of France joined England in a similar declaration. The duke of Ormond now,
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once more, hoped, by the assistance of cardinal Alberoni, the Spanish minister, to restore the pretender in England. He accordingly set sail with some troops, and proceeded as far as Cape Finisterre, where his fleet was dispersed, and disabled by a violent storm, which entirely frustrated the armament; and, from that time, the pretender seemed to lose all hopes of being received in England. This blow of fortune, together with the bad success of the Spanish arms in Sicily and elsewhere, once more induced them to wish for peace; and the king of Spain was at last contented to sign the quadruple alliance.

King George having thus, with equal vigour and deliberation, surmounted all the obstacles he met with in his way to the throne, and used every precaution that sagacity could suggest, for securing himself in it, again returned to England, where the addresses from both houses were as loyal as he could expect. From addressing they turned to an object of the greatest importance, namely, that of securing the dependency of the Irish parliament upon that of Great Britain. Maurice Annesly had appealed to the house of peers in England, from a decree of the house of Peers in Ireland; which was reversed. The British peers ordered the barons of the exchequer in Ireland, to put Mr. Annesly in possession of the lands he had lost by the decree in that kingdom. The barons obeyed this order, and the Irish house of peers passed a vote against them, as having attempted to diminish the just privileges of the parliament of Ireland; and, at the same time, ordered the barons to be taken under the custody of the black rod. On the other hand, the house of lords in England resolved, that the barons of the exchequer in Ireland had acted with cou-
rage

rage and fidelity; and addressed the king to signify his approbation of their conduct, by some marks of his favour. To complete their intention, a bill was prepared, by which the Irish house of lords was deprived of all rights of final jurisdiction. This was opposed in both houses. In the lower house Mr. Pitt asserted, that it would only increase the power of the English peers, who already had too much. Mr. Hungerford demonstrated that the Irish lords had always exerted their power of finally deciding causes. The duke of Leeds produced fifteen reasons against the bill; but, notwithstanding all opposition, it was carried by a great majority, and received the royal assent. The kingdom of Ireland was not, at that time, so well acquainted with the nature of liberty, and its own constitution, as it is at present. Their house of lords might then consist mostly of men bred up in luxury and ignorance; neither spirited enough to make opposition, nor skilful enough to conduct it.

But this blow, which the Irish felt severely, was not so great as that which England now began to suffer from that spirit of avarice and chicanery which had infected almost all ranks of people. In the year 1720, John Law, a Scotchman, had erected a company in France under the name of the Mississippi; which at first promised the deluded people immense wealth, but too soon appeared an imposture, and left the greatest part of that nation in ruin and distress. The *A. D. 1721.* year following, the people of England were deceived by just such another project, which is remembered by all by the name of the South-Sea scheme; and to this day felt by thousands. To explain this as concisely as possible, it is to be observed, that ever since the revolution,

tion, the government, not having sufficient supplies granted by parliament; or, what was granted requiring time to be collected, they were obliged to borrow money from several different companies of merchants; and, among the rest, from that company which traded to the South-Sea. In the year 1716, they were indebted to this company about nine millions and an half of money, for which they granted annually at the rate of six *per cent.* interest. As this company was not the only one, to which the government was debtor, and paid such large interest yearly, Sir Robert Walpole conceived a design of lessening these national debts, by giving the several companies an alternative, either of accepting a lower interest; namely, five *per cent.* for their money, or of being paid the principal. The different companies chose rather to accept of the diminished interest than the capital; and the South-Sea company accordingly having made up their debt to the government ten millions, instead of six hundred thousand pounds which they usually received as interest, were satisfied with five hundred thousand. In the same manner the governors and company of the bank, and other companies, were contented to receive a diminished annuity for their several loans, all which greatly lessened the debts of the nation. It was in this situation of things that Sir John Blount, who had been bred a scrivener, and was possessed of all the cunning and plausibility requisite for such an undertaking, proposed to the ministry, in the name of the South-Sea company, to lessen the national debt still further, by permitting the South-Sea company to buy up all the debts of the different companies, and thus to become the principal creditor of the state. The terms offered the govern-

ment were extremely advantageous. The South-Sea company was to redeem the debts of the nation out of the hands of the private proprietors, who were creditors to the government, upon whatever terms they could agree on; and, for the interest of this money, which they had thus redeemed, and taken into their own hands, they would be contented to be allowed for six years five *per cent.* and then the interest should be reduced to four *per cent.* and be redeemable by parliament. For these purposes a bill passed both houses; and as the directors of the South-Sea company could not of themselves alone be supposed to be possessed of money sufficient to buy up these debts of the government, they were impowered to raise it by opening a subscription, and granting annuities to such proprietors as should think proper to exchange their creditors; namely, the crown for the South-Sea company, with the advantages that might be made by their industry. The superior advantages with which these proprietors were flattered, by thus exchanging their property in the government funds for South-Sea company stock, were a chimerical prospect of having their money turned to great advantage, by a commerce to the southern parts of America, where it was reported that the English were to have some new settlements granted them by the king of Spain. The directors books therefore were no sooner opened for the first subscription, but crowds came to make the exchange; the delusion spread; subscriptions in a few days sold for double the price they had been bought for. The scheme succeeded, and the whole nation was infected with a spirit of avaritious enterprize. The infatuation prevailed; the stock increased to a surprising degree; but after a few months, the people

people awaked from their delirium; they found that all the advantages to be expected were merely imaginary; and an infinite number of families were involved in ruin. Many of the directors, whose arts had raised these vain expectations, had amassed surprising fortunes: it was, however, one consolation to the nation, to find the parliament stripping them of their ill-acquired wealth; and orders were given to remove all directors of the South-Sea company from their seats in the house of commons, or the places they possessed under the government. The delinquents being punished by a forfeiture of their estates, the parliament next converted its attention toward redressing the sufferers. Several useful and just resolutions were taken, and a bill was speedily prepared for repairing the mischief. Of the profits arising from the South-Sea scheme, the sum of seven millions was granted to the ancient proprietors; several additions also were made to their dividends out of what was possessed by the company in their own right; the remaining capital stock also was divided among all the proprietors at the rate of thirty-three pounds *per cent.* In the mean time petitions from all parts of the kingdom were presented to the house, demanding justice; and the whole nation seemed exasperated to the highest degree. During these transactions, the king, with serenity and wisdom, presided at the helm, influenced his parliament to pursue equitable measures, and, by his councils, endeavoured to restore the credit of the nation.

The discontents occasioned by these public calamities, once more gave the disaffected party hopes of rising. But, in all their councils they were weak, divided, and wavering. Their present designs, therefore, could not escape the vigi-

lance of the king, who had emissaries in every court, and who had made, by his alliances, every potentate a friend to his cause. He was therefore informed, by the duke of Orleans, regent of France, of a new conspiracy against him by several persons of distinction, which postponed his intended journey to Hanover. Among those against whom the most positive evidence was obtained, was Mr.

A. D. 1722. Christopher Layer, a young gentleman of the Middle Temple. He

was convicted of having enlisted men for the pretender's service, and received sentence of death; which he underwent, after having been often examined, and having strenuously refused, to the last, to discover his accomplices. He was the only person who suffered death upon this occasion; but several noblemen of high distinction were made prisoners upon suspicion. The duke of Norfolk, the bishop of Rochester, lord Orrery, and lord North and Grey were of this number. Of these, all, but the bishop of Rochester, came off without punishment, the circumstances not being sufficient against them for conviction. A bill was brought into the house of commons against him, although a peer, and though it met with some opposition, yet it was resolved by a great majority, that he should be deprived of his office and benefice, and banished the kingdom for ever. The bishop made no defence in the lower house, reserving all his power to be exerted in the house of lords. In that assembly he had many friends; his eloquence, politeness, and ingenuity had procured him many; and his cause being heard, a long and warm debate was the consequence. As there was little against him but intercepted letters, which were written in cypher, the earl Pawlet insisted

on the danger and injustice of departing, in such cases, from the fixed rules of evidence. The duke of Wharton having summed up the depositions, and shewn the insufficiency of them, concluded with saying, That let the consequences be what they would, he hoped the lustre of that house would be never tarnished, by condemning a man without evidence. The lord Bathurst spoke also against the bill, observing, That if such extraordinary proceedings were countenanced, he saw nothing remaining for him and others to do, but to retire to their country-houses, and there, if possible, quietly enjoy their estates within their own families, since the least correspondence, or intercepted letter, might be made criminal. Then turning to the bishops, he said, he could hardly account for the inveterate hatred and malice some persons bore the ingenious bishop of Rochester, unless it was, that they were infatuated like the wild Americans, who fondly believe they inherit, not only the spoils, but even the abilities of any man they destroy. The earl of Strafford spoke on the same side; as also lord Trevor, who observed, That if men were, in this unprecedented manner, proceeded against, without legal proof, in a short time, the minister's favour would be the subject's only protection; but that for himself, no apprehensions of what he might suffer, would deter him from doing his duty. He was answered by lord Seafield, who endeavoured to shew, that the evidence which had been produced before them was sufficient to convince any reasonable man; and in this he was supported by the duke of Argyle and lord Lechmere. To these lord Cowper replied, That the strongest argument urged in behalf of the bill, was necessity; but, for his part,

he could see nothing that could justify such unprecedented, and such dangerous proceedings. The other party, however, said little in answer; perhaps already sensible of a majority in their favour. The bill was passed against the bishop, and several lords entered their protest. Among the members of the house of commons, who had exerted themselves most strenuously in the bishop's favour, was doctor Friend, the celebrated physician; and he was now taken into custody on suspicion of treasonable practices. He was soon after, however, admitted to bail; his friend doctor Mead becoming his security. In two days after, the bishop of Rochester embarked for banishment, accompanied with his daughter; and, on the same day that he landed at Calais, the famous lord Bolingbroke arrived there, in his return to England, having obtained his majesty's pardon. Upon which the bishop, smiling, said, *His lordship and I are exchanged.* In this manner the bishop continued in exile and poverty till he died; though it may not be improper to observe, that doctor Sacheverel left him, by will, five hundred pounds.

Few transactions of importance happened during the remainder of this reign; the ministry were employed in making various and expensive negotiations, and covenants made without faith, and only observed from motives of interest or fear. The parliament made also some efforts to check the progress of vice and immorality, which now began to be diffused through every rank of life; luxury and profligacy had increased to a surprising degree; nor were there any transactions to fill the page of history, except the mercenary schemes of vile projectors, or the tasteless profusion of new-made opulence. The treaties lately concluded with Spain

Spain were again broken, perhaps by every party; admiral Hosier was sent to intercept the Spanish galleons from America; of which the Spaniards being apprized, remanded back their treasure; and the greatest part of the English fleet, sent on this errand, was rendered, by the worms, entirely unfit for service; and the men were cut off by the unhealthy climate and long voyage. *A. D. 1726.* To retaliate this, the Spaniard undertook the siege of Gibraltar, and with similar success. New treaties were set on foot; France offered its mediation; and such a reconciliation as treaties could procure was the consequence.

The king had not now, for two years, visited his German dominions; and therefore soon after the breaking up of parliament, he prepared for a journey to Hanover. Accordingly, having appointed an administration in his absence, he embarked for Holland; lay, upon his landing, at the little town of Vert; next day proceeded on his journey; and, in two days more, between ten and eleven at night, arrived at Delden, in all appearance in perfect health. He supped there very heartily, and continued his progress early the next morning. Between eight and nine he ordered the coach to stop, and, it being perceived that one of his hands lay motionless, monsieur Fabrice, who had formerly been the servant of the king of Sweden, and now attended king George, chafed it between his. As this had no effect, the surgeon was called, who followed on horseback, and also rubbed it with spirits; soon after the king's tongue began to swell, and he had just force enough to bid them hasten to Osnaburg; and, falling into Fabrice's arms, quite insensible, never recovered, but expired about eleven o'clock the next morning.

ing. He died on Sunday the eleventh of June, 1727, in the sixty-eighth year of his age, and in the thirteenth of his reign. Whatever was good or great in the reign of George I. ought to be attributed wholly to himself; whenever he deviated, it might justly be imputed to a ministry always partial, and often corrupt. He was almost ever attended with good fortune, which was partly owing to prudence, and more to assiduity. In short, his successes are the strongest instance of how much may be atchieved by moderate abilities, exerted with application and uniformity.

LETTER LIV.

I Have not hitherto said any thing of the literature of the present period, having resolved to refer it to a separate letter, in which we may have a more perspicuous view of it, than if blended with the ordinary occurrences of the state. Though learning had never received fewer encouragements than in the present reign, yet it never flourished more. That spirit of philosophy which had been excited in former ages, still continued to operate with the greatest success, and produced the greatest men in every profession. Among the divines, Atterbury and Clarke distinguished themselves. As a preacher, Atterbury united all the graces of style with all the elegance of a just delivery; he was natural, polite, spirited; and his sermons may be ranked among the first of this period. Clarke, on the other hand, despising the graces of eloquence, only sought after conviction, with rigorous though phlegmatic exactness, and brought moral truths almost to mathematical precision. Yet neither he, Cudworth,

Cudworth, nor any other divine, did such service to the reasoning world, as the great Mr. John Locke, who may be justly said to have reformed all our modes of thinking in metaphysical inquiry. Though the jargon of schools had been before him arraigned, yet several of their errors had still subsisted, and were regarded as true. Locke therefore set himself to overturn their systems, and refute their absurdities; these he effectually accomplished; for which reasons his book, which, when published, was of infinite service, may be found less useful at present, when the doctrines it was calculated to refute, are no longer subsisting.

Among the moral writers of this period, the earl of Shaftesbury is not to be passed over, whose elegance, in some measure, recompenses for his want of solidity. The opinions of all latter writers upon moral subjects, are only derived from the ancients. Morals are a subject on which the industry of man has been exercised in every age; and an infinite number of systems have been the result. That of Shaftesbury, in which he establishes a natural sense of moral beauty, was originally professed by Plato, and only adorned by the English philosopher.

This seemed to be the age of speculation. Berkeley, afterwards Bishop of Cloyne in Ireland, surpassed all his cotemporaries in subtlety of disquisition; but the mere efforts of reason, which are exerted rather to raise doubt than procure certainty, will never meet with much favour from so vain a being as man.

Lord Bolingbroke had also some reputation for metaphysical inquiry; his friends extolled his sagacity on that head; and the public were willing enough to acquiesce in their opinion; his fame

therefore might have continued to rise ; or, at least, would have never sunk, if he had never published. His works have appeared, and the public are no longer in their former sentiments.

In mathematics and natural philosophy, the vein opened by Newton, was prosecuted with success ; doctor Halley illustrated the theory of the tides, and increased the catalogue of the stars ; while Gregory reduced astronomy to one comprehensive and regular system.

Doctor Friend, in medicine, produced some ingenious theories, which, if they did not improve the art, at least shewed his abilities and learning in his profession. Doctor Mead was equally elegant, and more successful ; to him is owing the useful improvement of tapping in the dropsy, by means of a swathe.

But, of all the other arts, poetry in this age was carried to the greatest perfection. The language, for some ages, had been improving, but now seemed entirely divested of its roughness and barbarity. Among the poets of this period we may place John Phillips, author of several poems, but of none more admired than that humorous one intitled, *The splendid Shilling* ; he lived in obscurity, and died just above want. William Congreve deserves also particular notice ; his comedies, some of which were but coolly received upon their first appearance, seemed to mend upon repetition ; and he is, at present, justly allowed the foremost in that species of dramatic poesy. His wit is ever just and brilliant ; his sentiments new and lively ; and his elegance equal to his regularity. Next him Vanburgh is placed, whose humour seems more natural, and characters more new ; but he owes too many obligations to the French, entirely to pass for an original ;

ginal; and his total disregard of decency, in a great measure, impairs his merit. Farquhar is still more lively, and, perhaps, more entertaining than either; his pieces continue the favourite performances of the stage, and bear frequent repetition without satiety; but he often mistakes pertness for wit, and seldom strikes his characters with proper force or originality. However, he died very young; and it is remarkable, that he continued to improve as he grew older; his last play, intitled *The Beaux Stratagem*, being the best of his productions. Addison, both as a poet and prose writer, deserves the highest regard and imitation. His Campaign, and Letter to Lord Halifax from Italy, are master-pieces in the former, and his Essays published in the Spectator are inimitable specimens of the latter. Whatever he treated of was handled with elegance and precision; and that virtue which was taught in his writings, was enforced by his example. Steele was Addison's friend and admirer; his comedies are perfectly polite, chaste, and genteel; nor were his other works contemptible; he wrote on several subjects, and yet it is amazing, in the multiplicity of his pursuits, how he found leisure for the discussion of any. Ever persecuted by creditors, whom his profuseness drew upon him, or pursuing impracticable schemes, suggested by ill-grounded ambition. Dean Swift was the professed antagonist of both Addison and him. He perceived that there was a spirit of romance mixed with all the works of the poets who preceded him; or, in other words, that they had drawn nature on the most pleasing side. There still therefore was a place left for him, who, careless of censure, should describe it just as it was, with all its deformities; he therefore owes much of his fame, not so much

to the greatness of his genius, as to the boldness of it. He was dry, sarcastic, and severe; and suited his style exactly to the turn of his thought, being concise and nervous. In this period also flourished many of subordinate fame. Prior was the first who adopted the French elegant easy manner of telling a story; but if what he has borrowed from that nation be taken from him, scarce any thing will be left upon which he can lay claim to applause in poetry. Rowe was only outdone by Shakespear and Otway as a tragic writer; he has fewer absurdities than either; and is, perhaps, as pathetic as they; but his flights are not so bold, nor his characters so strongly marked. Perhaps his coming later than the rest may have contributed to lessen the esteem he deserves. Garth had success as a poet; and, for a time, his fame was even greater than his desert. In his principal work, the *Dispensary*, his versification is negligent, and his plot is now become tedious; but whatever he may lose as a poet, it would be improper to rob him of the merit he deserves for having written the prose dedication, and preface, to the poem already mentioned; in which he has shewn the truest wit, with the most refined elegance. Parnel, though he has written but one poem, namely, the *Hermit*, yet has found a place among the English first-rate poets. Gay, likewise, by his *Fables* and *Pastorals*, has acquired an equal reputation. But of all who have added to the stock of English poetry, Pope, perhaps, deserves the first place. On him foreigners look as one of the most successful writers of his time: his versification is the most harmonious, and his correctness the most remarkable of all our poets. A noted cotemporary of his own, calls the English the finest writers
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on moral topics, and Pope the noblest moral writer of all the English. Mr. Pope has somewhere named himself the last English muse; and, indeed, since his time, we have seen scarce any production that can justly lay claim to immortality; he carried the language to its highest perfection; and those who have attempted still farther to improve it, instead of ornament, have only caught finery.

Such was the learning of this period; it flourished without encouragement, and the English taste seemed to diffuse itself over all Europe. The French tragedies began to be written after the model of ours; our philosophy was adopted by all who pretended to reason for themselves. At present, however, when the learned of Europe are turned to the English writers for instruction, all spirit of learning has ceased amongst us. So little has been got by literature for more than an age, that none chuse to turn to it for preferment. Church preferments, which were once given as the rewards of learning, have, for some time, deviated to the intriguing, venal, and base. All desire of novelty, in thinking, is suppressed amongst us; and our scholars, more pleased with security and ease than honour, coolly follow the reasonings of their predecessors, and walk round the circle of former discovery.

LETTER LV.

UPON the death of George I. his son George II. ascended the throne; of inferior abilities to the late king, and consequently still more strongly attached to his dominions on the continent. The various subsidies that had been in the last reign granted, to maintain foreign connexions, were still kept up in this; and the late system of politics underwent no sort of alteration. The rights and privileges of the throne of England were, in general, committed to the minister's care; the royal concern being chiefly fixed upon balancing the German powers, and gaining an ascendancy for the elector of Hanover in the empire. The ministry was, at first, divided between lord Townshend, a man of extensive knowledge; the earl of Chesterfield, the only man of genius employed under this government; and Sir Robert Walpole, who soon after engrossed the greatest share of the administration to himself.

Sir Robert Walpole, who is to make the principal figure in the present reign, had from low beginnings, raised himself to the head of the treasury. Strongly attached to the house of Hanover, and serving it at times when it wanted his assistance, he still maintained the prejudices with which he set out; and, unaware of the alteration of sentiments in the nation, still attempted to govern by part. He, probably, like every other minister, began by endeavouring to serve his country; but meeting with strong opposition, his succeeding endeavours were rather employed in maintaining his post, than of being serviceable in it. The declining

ing prerogative of the crown might have been an early object of his attention ; but, in the sequel, those very measures which he took to increase it, proved to be the most effectual means of undermining it. As latterly all his aims were turned only to serve himself, and his friends, he undertook to make a majority in the house of commons, by bribing the members ; and, what was still worse, avowed the corruption. As all spirit of integrity was now laughed out of the kingdom ; and as the people were held to duty by no motives of religious obedience to the throne, patriotism was ridiculed, and venality practised without shame. As such a disposition of things naturally produced opposition, Sir Robert was possessed of a most phlegmatic insensibility to bear reproach, and a calm dispassionate way of reasoning upon such topics as he desired to enforce. His discourse was fluent without eloquence ; and his reasons convincing, without any share of elevation.

The house of commons, which, in the preceding reign, had been distinguished into whigs and jacobites, now underwent another change, and was again divided into the court and country party. The court party were for favouring all the schemes of the ministry, and applauding all the measures of the crown. They regarded foreign alliances as conducive to internal security ; and paid the troops of other countries for their promises of future assistance. Of these Sir Robert was the leader ; and such as he could not convince by his eloquence, he undertook to buy over by places and pensions. The other side, who called themselves the country party, were entirely averse to continental connections ; they complained that immense sums were lavished on subsidies, which could never be
 2 useful ;

useful; and that alliances were bought with money, which should be only rewarded by a reciprocation of good intentions. These looked upon the frequent journeys of the king to his electoral dominions with a jealous eye, and sometimes hinted at the alienation of the royal affections from England. Most of these had been strong assertors of the Protestant succession; and not fearing the reproach of jacobitism, they spoke with still greater boldness. As the court party generally threatened the house of commons with imaginary dangers to the state; so these of the country usually declaimed against the encroachments of the prerogative. The threats of neither were founded in truth; the kingdom was in no danger from abroad; nor was internal liberty in the least infringed by the crown. On the contrary, those who viewed the state with an unprejudiced eye, were of opinion that the prerogatives of the crown were the only part of the constitution that was growing every day weaker; that while the king's thoughts were turned to foreign concerns, the ministry were unmindful of his authority at home; and that every day the government was making hasty steps to an aristocracy, the worst of all governments. As Walpole headed the court party, so the leaders of the opposite side were Mr. William Pitt, Mr. Shippen, Sir William Wyndham, and Mr. Hungerford.

The great objects of controversy during this reign, were the national debt, and the number of forces to be kept in pay. The government, at the accession of the present monarch, owed more than thirty millions of money; and, though it was a time of profound peace, yet this sum was continually found to increase. To pay off this, the
ministry

ministry proposed many projects, and put some into execution; but, what could be expected from a set of men, who made the public wealth only subservient to private interest, and who grew powerful on the wrecks of their country? Demands for new supplies were made every session of parliament, either for the purposes of securing friends upon the continent, of guarding the internal polity, or for enabling the ministry to act vigorously in conjunction with their allies abroad. These were as regularly opposed as made: the speakers of the country party ever insisted that the English had no business to embroil themselves with the affairs of the continent; that expenses were incurred without prudence or necessity; and that the increase of the national debt, by multiplying taxes, would, at length, become intolerable to the people. Whatever reason there might be in such arguments, they were, notwithstanding, constantly over-ruled; and every demand granted with pleasure and profusion.

All these treaties and alliances, however, in which the kingdom had been lately involved, seemed now way productive of the general tranquillity expected from them. The Spaniards, who had never been thoroughly reconciled, still continued their depredations, and plundered the English merchants upon the southern coasts of America, as if they had been pirates. This was the reign of negotiations; and, from these alone, the ministry promised themselves and the nation redress. Still, however, the enemy went on to insult and seize, regardless of our vain expostulations. *A. D. 1728.* The British merchants complained by petition, of the losses sustained by the Spaniards; and the house of commons deliberated upon

upon this subject. They examined the evidence, and presented an address to his Majesty. He promised them all possible satisfaction, and negotiations were begun as formerly, and a new treaty was signed at Vienna between the emperor and the kings of Great Britain and Spain, tending to confirm the former. Though such transactions did not give the security that was expected from them, yet they, in some measure, put off the troubles of Europe for a time. An interval of peace succeeded, in which scarce any events happened that deserve the remembrance of an historian; such intervals are, however, the periods of happiness to a people; for history is too often but the register of human calamities. By this treaty at Vienna the king of England conceived hopes, that the peace of Europe was established upon the most lasting foundation. Don Carlos, upon the death of the duke of Parma, was, by the assistance of an English fleet, put in peaceable possession of Parma and Placentia. Six thousand Spaniards were quietly admitted, and quartered in the duchy of Tuscany, to secure for him the reversion of that dukedom. Thus we see Europe, in some measure, resembling a republic, putting monarchs into new kingdoms, and depriving others of their succession by an universal concurrence. But this amicable disposition among the great powers could never continue long; and the republic of Europe must be but an empty name, until there be some controlling power set up by universal consent, to enforce obedience to the law of nations.

During this interval of profound peace, nothing remarkable happened, except the constant disputations in the house of commons, where the con-

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tests between the court and country party were carried on with the greatest acrimony; the speeches, on either side, being dictated less by reason than resentment. A calm uninterested reader is now surprized at the heat with which many subjects of little importance in themselves, were discussed at that time; he now smiles at those denunciations of ruin with which their orations are replete. The truth is, the liberty of a nation is better supported by the opposition, than by what is said in the opposition.

In times of profound tranquillity the slightest occurrences become objects of universal attention. A society of men, intitled, *The charitable Corporation*, excited the indignation of the public. Their professed intention was, to lend money at legal interest to the poor, upon small pledges; and to persons of better rank, upon proper security. Their capital was at first limited to thirty thousand pounds; but they afterwards increased it to six hundred thousand. This money was granted in by subscription; and the care of conducting the capital was intrusted to a proper number of directors. This company, having continued for more than twenty years, the cashier, George Robinson, and the warehouse-keeper of the company, disappeared in one day. Five hundred thousand pounds of the capital appeared to be sunk and embezzled by the directors, in a manner the proprietors could not account for. They therefore petitioned the house, representing the manner in which they had been defrauded of such vast sums of money, and the distress to which many were reduced, in consequence of such imposition. The petition was received, and a secret committee appointed to inquire into the grievance. They soon discovered a most iniquitous scene of fraud,

fraud, which had been carried on by Thomson and Robinson, in concert with some of the directors, for embezzling the capital, and cheating the proprietors. Many persons of rank and quality were concerned in this infamous conspiracy; even some of the first characters in the nation did not escape without censure. The house of commons declared their resentment, and expelled one or two of their members; but the sufferers met with scarce any redress. Nor can I mention such a circumstance without reflecting on that spirit of rapacity and avarice which infected every degree of people. An ill example in the governing part of a country ever diffuses itself downward; and, while the ministry do not blush at detection, the people of every rank will not fear guilt. About this time not less than five members of parliament were expelled for the most sordid acts of knavery; Sir Robert Sutton, Sir Archibald Grant, and George Robinson, for their frauds in the management of the *Charitable Corporation* scheme; Dennis Bond, esquire, and serjeant Burch, for a fraudulent sale of the late earl of Derwentwater's forfeited estates. Luxury had produced prodigality, the sure parent of every meanness. It was even asserted in the house of lords, that not one shilling of the forfeited estates was ever applied to the service of the public; but became the reward of avarice and venality.

Another occurrence of a more private nature, about this time, excited public compassion, not without a degree of horror: Richard Smith, a book-binder, and his wife, had long lived together, and struggled with those wants, which, notwithstanding the profusion of the rich at this time, oppressed the poor. Their mutual tenderness for each

each other, was the only comfort they had in their distresses, which distresses were increased by having a child, which they knew not how to maintain. At length, they took the desperate resolution of dying by their own hands; the child's throat was cut, and the husband and wife were found hanging in their bed-chamber. They left a letter behind, containing the reasons which induced them to this act of desperation; they declared, that they could no longer support a life of such complicated wretchedness; and thought it tenderness to take their child with them, from a world where they themselves had found no compassion. Suicide, in many instances, is ascribed to phrenzy: we have here an instance of self-murder, concerted with composure, and borrowing the aids of reason for its vindication.

LETTER LVI.

THE history of England has little during this interval, to excite curiosity. The debates in parliament grew every day more obstinate, as every subject happened to come round in voting the annual supplies. But as the subjects were mostly the same, so also were the arguments. There was one, however, of a different nature from those in the usual course of business, which was laboured for strenuously by the ministry, and as warmly opposed by their antagonists, namely, the excise bill, which Sir Robert Walpole introduced into the house, by first de- *A. D. 1733.* claiming against the frauds practised by the factors in London, who were employed by the American planters in selling their tobacco. To prevent these frauds

frauds he proposed, instead of having the customs levied in the usual manner upon tobacco, that what was imported should be lodged in warehouses appointed for that purpose by the officers of the crown; from thence to be sold, after paying the duty of four-pence *per* pound, when the proprietor found a market for it. This proposal raised a violent ferment, not less in the house than without doors. Those who opposed the scheme, asserted, that it would expose the factors to such hardships, that they would not be able to continue the trade, nor would it prevent the frauds complained of. They asserted, that it would produce an additional swarm of excise-officers and warehouse-keepers, which would at once render the ministry formidable, and the people dependant. Arguments, however, were not what the ministry most dreaded; for the people had been raised into such a ferment, that all the avenues to the house were crowded with complaining multitudes; and Sir Robert began even to fear for his life. The ministry carried the proposal in the house; but observing the tumult of the people, they thought fit to drop the design. The miscarriage of the bill was celebrated with public rejoicings in London and Westminster; and the minister was burned in effigy by the populace.

This success, in the members of the opposition, encouraged them to go on to a proposal for repealing an act made in the last reign, by which the house of commons was to be septennial. They proposed that parliaments should again be made triennial, as had been settled at the revolution. In the course of this debate, in which they were opposed, as usual, by the ministry, they reflected, with great severity, on the measures of the late reign.

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They asserted, that the septennial act was an incroachment on the rights of the people; that during the continuance of that parliament several severe laws had been enacted; that by one of these a man might be removed, and tried in any place where the jury might be favourable to the crown, and where the prisoner's witnesses could not, or dared not, to come. That, by another, a justice of the peace was impowered to put the best subjects to immediate death only, after reading a proclamation against riots. The South-Sea scheme, they said, was established by an act of a septennial parliament; and the excise bill had like, under their influence also, to have passed into a law. Sir William Wyndham distinguished himself in this debate: *Let us suppose*, said he, *a man without any sense of honour, raised to be a chief minister of state. Suppose him possessed of great wealth; the plunder of the nation. Suppose him screened by a corrupt majority of his creatures, and insulting over all men of family, sense, and honour, in the nation. Let us suppose a venal parliament, and an ignorant king; I hope such a case will never occur; but should such ever happen to be at once united, a short parliament will be the only means of lessening the evil.* Notwithstanding these expostulations, the ministry were, as usual, victorious, and the motion suppressed by the majority. Thus the country party now found themselves out-numbered upon every occasion; they had long complained, in vain, that debate was useless, since every member seemed to have listed himself under the banners of party, to which he held without shrinking. Despairing therefore of being able to stem the torrent of corruption, they retired to their seats in the country, and left the ministry an undisputed majority in the house.

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The minister being now left without opposition in the house, took this opportunity to render his rivals odious or contemptible, by getting several useful laws passed in their absence; while the king laboured, with equal assiduity, to adjust the political scale of Europe; and, for this purpose, made several journies to his electoral dominions. But his assiduity in healing foreign differences did not prevent one of a more domestic nature; for a misunderstanding arose between him and the prince of Wales; a prince that was the darling of the people, and who professed his dislike both to the ministry and their venal measures.

A. D. 1738. He had been, a short time before, married to the princess of Saxegotha; and the prince's mistaking a message from the king, at a time when the princess was lying-in, first caused the rupture. It was soon after widened by the vile emissaries of the court, so that his majesty forbade the prince his presence; and gave orders that none of his attendants should be admitted to court. A motion however was made in the house of commons, for increasing the prince's settlement, which was but fifty thousand pounds, to an hundred thousand. It was represented that so much had been granted by the late king, to his present majesty when prince of Wales; and that such a settlement was conformable to the practice of former times, and necessary to the independency of the heir apparent to the English crown. This motion was vigorously opposed by Sir Robert Walpole, as an incroachment on the prerogative, and an officious intermeddling in the king's family affairs. The supporters of the motion observed, that the allowance of fifty thousand pounds was not sufficient to defray the prince's yearly expences,

pences, which, by his majesty's own regulation, amounted to sixty-three thousand. The motion, however, met the fate of all other anti-ministerial measures, being rejected by the majority.

But whatever imaginary disappointments the people might suffer, there was a blow levelled at the little wit that was left remaining, which has effectually banished all taste from the stage, and from which it has never since recovered. When Walpole entered into power, he resolved to despise that set of under-rate writers, who lived by arraigning every ministry, and disseminate scandal and abuse. For a time he prosecuted that intention; but at last, found it necessary to employ a set of mean hirelings, to answer calumny with calumny. He wanted judgment to distinguish genius; or none possessed of such a gift were mean enough to applaud his measures. From hence he took an implacable aversion to the press, which so severely exposed his corruption, and branded his follies. But the press alone was not the only scourge he had to fear; the theatre joined all its ridicule, and he saw himself exposed as the object of scorn, as well as hatred. When licence once transgresses the rules of decency, it knows no bounds. Some of the pieces exhibited at that time were not only severe, but immoral also. This was what the minister held to; he brought in a bill to limit the number of play-houses; to subject all dramatic writings to the inspection of the lord chamberlain, whose licence was to be obtained before any work could appear. Among those who undertook to oppose this bill, was the earl of Chesterfield, who observed that the laws already in being for keeping the stage within due bounds, were every way sufficient. *If, says he, our stage-*
players

players at any time exceed those bounds, they ought to be prosecuted, and may be punished. A new law therefore is, in the present instance, unnecessary; and every unnecessary law is dangerous. Wit, my lords, is the property of those that have it; and it is too often the only property they have. It is unjust therefore to rob a man at any rate of his possessions; but it is cruelty to spoil him, if already poor. If poets and players are to be restrained, let them be restrained like other subjects; let them be tried by their peers, and let not a lord chamberlain be made the sovereign judge of wit. A power lodged in the hands of a single man to determine, without limitation or appeal, is a privilege unknown to our laws, and inconsistent with our constitution. The house applauded his wit and eloquence; and the question was carried against him.

The discontents occasioned by such proceedings at home, were still more increased by the depredations of the Spaniards. They disputed the right of the English to cut logwood in the bay of Campeachy in America; a right which had been often acknowledged, but never clearly explained, in all former treaties between the two kingdoms. Their *Guarda Costas* plundered the English merchants with impunity; and upon the least resistance behaved with insolence, cruelty, and rapine. The subjects of Britain were buried in the mines of Potosi, deprived of all means of conveying their complaints to their protectors, and their vessels confiscated, in defiance of justice. The English court made frequent remonstrances to that of Madrid, of this outrageous violation of treaties, and they received for answer only promises of inquiry, which produced no reformation. Our merchants loudly complained of these outrages; but the minister expected, from negotiation, that redress
which

which could only be obtained by arms. He knew that a war would increase the difficulties he had to encounter; and he was sensible, that those he already encountered required all his art and industry to remove. A war, he was sensible, would require expences which he wished to share in peace. In short, all his measures now were not to serve the state, but to preserve his power. Influenced by these considerations, he industriously endeavoured to avoid a rupture. The fears he discovered only served to increase the enemies insolence and pride. However the complaints of the English merchants were loud enough to reach the house of commons; their letters and memorials were produced, and their grievances enforced at the bar by council. The house, at length, agreed to an address, to intreat his majesty to obtain effectual relief, and to convince Spain that its indignities would be no longer borne with impunity. These complaints produced a convention between the two crowns, concluded at Prado, importing, that two plenipotentiaries should meet at Madrid, to regulate the respective pretensions of either kingdom, with regard to the trade in America, and the limits of Florida and Carolina. These conferences were to be finished in eight months; and in the mean time, all hostile preparations were to cease on either side. His catholic majesty agreed to pay the king of Great Britain ninety-five thousand pounds, to satisfy the demands of the British subjects upon the crown of Spain, after deducting from the whole the demands of the crown and subjects of Spain upon that of Britain. Such an agreement as this was justly regarded on the side of the British ministry, as a base desertion of the honour and interests of their country. And

when the house of commons came to take the convention under consideration, it produced the warmest debate. All the adherents to the prince of Wales joined in the opposition. It was alleged, that the Spaniards, instead of granting a redress, had rather extorted a release for their former conduct. That they still asserted their right of searching English ships, and had not so much as mentioned the word *satisfaction* in all the treaty. Notwithstanding all the remonstrances against this treaty, the majority of the house declared in its favour; and several members of the opposite sentiment retired from parliament, having despaired of being longer serviceable in a place where party, and not reason, was seen to prevail.

As Spain had engaged to pay a large sum of money, by this convention, some time after, when the minister demanded a supply, upon a different occasion, lord Bathurst moved to know, whether Spain had paid the sums stipulated, as the time limited for the payment was expired. The duke of Newcastle, by his majesty's permission, acquainted the house, that it was not paid; and that Spain had assigned no reason for the delay. In some measure, therefore, to atone for his former slowness, the minister now began to put the nation into a condition for war. Letters of reprisals were granted against the Spaniards. These preparations were regarded by the Spanish court as actual hostilities. The French ambassador at the Hague declared, that the king his master was obliged, by treaties, to assist the king of Spain; he dissuaded the Dutch from espousing the cause of England; who promised him an inviolable neutrality. It is curious enough to consider the revolutions which the political system of Europe had undergone.

Not above twenty years before, France and England were combined against Spain; at present, France and Spain united against England. Those statesmen who build upon alliances as a lasting basis of power, will, at length, find themselves fatally mistaken.

A rupture between Great Britain and Spain being now become inevitable, the people, who had long clamoured for war, began to feel uncommon alacrity at its approach; and the ministry finding it unavoidable, began to be earnest in preparation. Orders were issued for augmenting the land forces, and raising a body of marines. Two rich Spanish prizes were taken in the Mediterranean, and war declared against them in *A. D.* 1739. Admiral Vernon was sent to the West-Indies, commander of the fleet, in order to distress the Spaniards in that part of the globe. Vernon was a rough and honest soldier, untainted with the corruption or the effeminacy of the times. He had in the house of commons asserted, that Porto-Bello, a fort and harbour in South America, might be easily taken, and that he himself would undertake to reduce it with six ships only. A project which appeared so wild, and impossible, was ridiculed by the ministry; but, as he still insisted upon the proposal, they were pleased to comply with his request. This they supposed would at once rid them of a troublesome antagonist in the house; and, in case of his failure, it would be a new cause of triumph at his disgrace. In this, however, they were disappointed. The admiral, with six ships only, attacked and demolished all the fortifications of the place, and came away victorious, almost without bloodshed. This dawning of success upon the British arms induced the

house of commons to enter vigorously into the king's measures for carrying on the war. They enabled him to equip a very powerful navy; they voted a subsidy to the king of Denmark, and empowered their sovereign to defray some other expences, not specified in the estimates; the whole of their grants amounting to about four millions. The war was now carried on with vigour, and the debates in the house of commons became less violent. In a nation, like England, of arts, arms, and commerce, war, at certain intervals, must ever be serviceable. It turns the current of wealth from the industrious to the enterprising. Thus, all orders of mankind find encouragement, and the nation becomes composed of individuals, who have skill to acquire property, and who have courage to defend it.

LETTER LVIII.

A War between England and Spain was sufficient to communicate disturbances over all the globe. Countries that were once too obscure to be known, were now seen to send out fleets, one ship of which was capable of destroying all the naval power of an Asiatic empire. A squadron of ships commanded by commodore Anson was equipped, in order to sail through the Straights of Magellan into the South-Sea, and to act against the enemy on the coasts of Chili and Peru. This fleet was to co-operate occasionally with admiral Vernon across the Isthmus of Darien, but the delays and blunders of the ministry frustrated this scheme, though originally well laid. However, though

though too late in the season, the commodore set forward with five ships of the line, a frigate, and two store-ships, supplied with provisions and other merchandize, designed to carry on a trade with the savage inhabitants of that part of the world, or to conciliate their affections. The number of men amounted, in all, to about fourteen hundred, including two hundred invalids taken from the hospitals, and two hundred new raised recruits. This whole expedition is a fine instance of the power of perseverance in forcing fortune. The commodore steered his course by the island of Madeira, proceeded to the Cape Verd Islands, and sailed along the coasts of Brazil. He refreshed for some time at the island of St. Catharine, in twenty-seven degrees of southern latitude; a spot that enjoys all the verdure and fruitfulness of those luxurious climates. From this place he steered still onward into the cold and tempestuous climates of the south, along the coast of Patagonia; and, in about five months, entered the famous Streights of Magellan. After having suffered the most violent tempests, he doubled Cape Horn; the rest of his fleet were dispersed or wrecked; his crew desplorably disabled by the scurvy; and his own ship with difficulty arrived on the Island of Juan Fernandez. In this delicious abode he remained for some time, where nature seemed, in some measure, to console mankind, for the calamities of their own avarice and ambition. In order to improve still farther a retreat of such elegance, he ordered several European seeds and fruits to be sown upon the island, which increased to such a surprising degree, that some Spaniards, who, several years after, landed there, and found them in plenty, could not avoid acknowledging this act of generosity and benevolence.

benevolence. Here the commodore was joined by one ship more of his fleet, and by the Tryal frigate of seven guns. Advancing now northward, toward the tropic of Capricorn, he attacked the city of Payta by night. In this bold attempt he made no use of his ships, nor even disembarked all his men. A few soldiers landed by night, and filled the whole town with terror and confusion. The governor of the garrison, and the inhabitants, fled on all sides; accustomed to cruelty over a conquered enemy themselves, they expected a similitude of treatment. In the mean time, for three days, a small number of English kept possession of the town, and stripped it of all its treasures and merchandize, to an immense amount. Such of the negroes as had not fled were made use of in carrying the goods of their former masters on board the English shipping; and the Spaniards refusing to treat, soon saw their town all in flames. This, however, was but a small punishment for all the cruelties which they had practised in taking possession of that country, upon its first inhabitants. The plunder of this place served to enrich the captors; and the ravage made among them, by the scurvy, still increased the share of every survivor. Soon after, this small squadron came up as far as Panama, situated on the Straights of Darien, upon the western side of the great American continent; so that by Anson on the one, and Vernon on the other, the Spanish empire was attacked on both sides; but the scheme failed from Vernon's want of success.

Anson, who now only commanded two ships, the remainder having either put back to England, or been wrecked by the tempests, placed all his hopes in taking one of those rich Spanish ships, which

which trade between the Philippine islands, near the coast of China and Mexico, on the Spanish main. Only one or two, at the most, of these vessels passed from one continent to the other in a year. These are made immensely strong, large, and carry great quantities of treasure and merchandize. The commodore therefore, and his little fleet, traversed that great ocean lying between the Asiatic and American continent, in hopes of meeting this rich prize, which it was hoped would, at this time of the year, return from the east, and amply repay the adventurers for all their dangers and fatigues. Avarice thus became honourable when pursued through peril and distress. But the scurvy once more visited his crew, now long kept at sea, and without fresh provisions. This disorder, though it takes the same name, is very different from that on land. The sea scurvy is attended with an universal putrefaction, the teeth loosen, old wounds that are healed again open, and sometimes the limbs are seen to drop off at the joints. By this terrible disorder several of his men daily fell, and others were disabled. One of his ships becoming leaky, and the number of his hands decreasing, he thought proper to set it on fire in the midst of the ocean. His fleet now being reduced only to one ship, called the *Centurion*, of sixty guns, and all the crew in the most deplorable situation, he cast anchor on the deserted island of Tinian, which lies about half way between the old and new world. This island had, some years before, been peopled by near thirty thousand inhabitants, but an epidemical distemper coming among them, destroyed a part, and the rest forsook the place. Nothing however could exceed the beauty of this spot. The most roman-

tic imagination cannot form a scene surpassing what Tinian naturally afforded; greens, groves, cascades, fields, flowers, and prospects. This retreat saved the English Squadron. All that a sea-beaten company of mariners could wish, was found here in great abundance; clear and wholesome water, medicinal herbs, domestic animals, and other necessities for refitting their shattered vessel. Thus refreshed, he went forwards towards China, passed by the kingdom of Formosa, and went up the river Canton, in order to careen the only ship that was now left him. Being thus far on his way homeward, nothing can better testify the hardy and untameable spirit of the English, than his venturing once more back into the same ocean, where he had experienced such a variety of distress. The commodore having put his vessel into good order, by the assistance of the Chinese, and having taken Dutch and Indian sailors on board, he again returned towards America. At length, on the 9th of June, he discovered the galleon he so ardently expected. This vessel was formed as well for the purposes of war as of merchandize. It mounted sixty guns and five hundred men, while the crew of the commodore did not exceed half that number. The engagement soon began; but as those who attack have always the advantage of those who defend, and as the English are more expert in naval affairs than any other nation; the Spanish ship soon became the Centurion's prize. There were but a few men killed on the side of the English, while the Spaniards lost near seventy. The conqueror now returned to Canton, once more, with his prize. He there maintained the honour of his country, in refusing to pay the imposts which were laid upon ordinary merchants;

merchants; and insisted that an English ship of war was exempted from such a duty. From Canton he proceeded to the *Cape of Good Hope*, and prosecuted his voyage to England, *A. D.* 1744. where he arrived in safety, with immense riches. His last prize was valued at three hundred and thirteen thousand pounds sterling; and the different captures that had been made before this last piece of good fortune, might amount to as much more. Upon his return, commodore Anson received all that honour which prudence and perseverance deserve. He soon became the oracle consulted in all naval deliberations; the king afterwards raised him to the dignity of the peerage; and he was made first lord of the Admiralty.

LETTER LVIII.

THIS expedition of Anson took up near three years. The English, in the mean time, carried on their operations against Spain with vigour, and various success. When Anson had set out, it was only to act a subordinate part to a formidable armament, designed for the coasts of New Spain, consisting of twenty-nine ships of the line, and almost an equal number of frigates, furnished with all kinds of warlike stores, near fifteen thousand seamen, and twelve thousand land forces. Never was a fleet more completely equipped, nor never had the nation more sanguine hopes of victory. Lord Cathcart commanded the land forces; but, dying on the passage, the command devolved upon General Wentworth, whose chief merit was his favour with those in power. This, with several

ral other unfortunate circumstances, concurred to frustrate the hopes of the public. The ministry, without any visible reason, had detained the fleet in England until the season for action was almost over. In the country where they were to carry on their operations, periodical rains begin about the end of April; and this change in the atmosphere is always attended with epidemical distempers. They, at length, however, set sail for the continent of New Spain; and after some tempests, and some delays, arrived before Carthagena. This city, which lies within sixty miles of Panama, serves as the magazine for the Spanish merchandize, which is brought from Europe hither, and from thence transported, by land, to Panama, lying on the opposite coast. The taking of Carthagena therefore would have interrupted the whole trade between Old Spain and the New. The troops were landed on the island Terra Bomba, near the mouth of the harbour known by the name of the Bocca-Chica, which was fortified by all the arts of engineering. The British forces erected a battery on shore, with which they made a breach in the principal fort; while the admiral sent a number of ships to divide the fire of the enemy, and to co-operate with the endeavours of the army. The breach being deemed practicable, the forces advanced to the attack; but the Spaniards deserted the forts; which, had they courage, they might have defended with success. The troops, upon this success, were brought nearer the city, where they found a greater opposition than they had expected. The climate killed numbers of the men; and a dissension which arose between the land and naval officers, retarded all the operations. Stimulated by mutual recriminations,

tions, the general ordered his troops to attack the fort of St. Lazar; but the guides being slain, the troops mistook their way, and attacked the strongest part of the fortification, where, after suffering incredible slaughter, with the most serene intrepidity, they were, at length, obliged to retire. Bad provisions, a horrid climate, and an epidemical fever, still more contributed to thin their numbers, and to deprive them of all hopes of success. It was determined therefore to re-embark the troops, and to conduct them, as soon as possible, from this scene of slaughter and contagion. The fortifications and harbour were demolished; and the fleet returned to Jamaica. This fatal miscarriage, which tarnished the British arms, was no sooner known in England, than the kingdom was filled with murmurs and discontent; a measure which if it had succeeded, would have crowned the promoters of it with honour, now only served to cover them with reproach. The greatest part of this discontent fell upon the minister; his former conduct, which justly deserved censure, was not so powerfully objected against him, as this failure, of which he was innocent. It is not villainy, but misfortune that finds censure from mankind. Besides, the activity of the enemy in distressing the trade of England contributed to increase the murmurs of the people. Their privateers were so numerous and successful, that in the beginning of this year they had taken, since the commencement of the war, four hundred and seven ships belonging to the subjects of Great Britain. The English, tho' at immense expence in equipping fleets, seemed tamely to lie down under every blow, and suffered one loss after another without reprisal. This general dis-

content had a manifest influence upon the election of members for the new parliament. All the adherents of the prince of Wales, who now lived, retired from the court, as a private gentleman, concurred in the opposition to the ministry. Obstinate struggles were maintained in all parts of the kingdom; and such a national spirit of opposition prevailed, that the country interest seemed, at length, to preponderate in the house of commons. It was soon seen that the interest of the minister was in the wane, and that opinion, once established, began to deprive him of even those who had determined to act with neutrality. *Ex proclivantes*, as Ovid says, *omne recumbit onus*.

Sir Robert now tottered on the brink of ruin. He was sensible that nothing but a division in the opposition could give him safety. The prince was his most formidable rival; a prince revered by the whole nation, for his humanity, benevolence, and candour. These were only private virtues; but these were all he had then a liberty of exercising. The minister's first attempt was, to endeavour taking him from the party; a message therefore was carried to his royal highness by the bishop of Oxford, importing, that if the prince would write a letter to the king, he and all his counsellors should be taken into favour, fifty thousand pounds should be added to his revenue, two hundred thousand given him to pay his debts, and suitable provision should be made, in due time, for all his followers. This, to a prince already involved in debt, from the necessity of keeping up his dignity, was a tempting offer; but his royal highness generously disdained it, declaring he would accept no such conditions dictated to him under the influence of Sir Robert Walpole.

pole. The minister now therefore saw that no
 arts could dissolve the combination against him;
 he resolved, as an expiring struggle, to try his
 strength once more in the house of commons upon
 a disputed election; but he had the mortification
 to see the majority still increased against him by
 sixteen voices. He then declared he would never
 sit in that house more. The parliament was ad-
 journed the next day, and Sir Robert being crea-
 ted earl of Orford, resigned all his employments.
 Never was a joy more universal and sincere than
 this resignation produced. The people now flatter-
 ed themselves that all their domestic grievances
 would find redress; that their commerce would
 be protected abroad; that the war would be car-
 ried on with vigour; and that the house of com-
 mons would be unanimous in every measure. But
 they were disappointed in most of their expecta-
 tions. The misconduct of a minister is more like-
 ly to affect his successor than himself, as a weak
 reign ever produces a feeble succession. The
 house of commons had been for a long time in-
 creasing in power, and Walpole, with all his arts,
 was, in fact, rather weakening than extending
 the prerogative. By his method of bribing oppo-
 sition he had taught the venal to oppose him; and,
 by his increasing the national debt, he weakened
 the vigour of the crown in war, and made it more
 dependant upon parliament in times of peace. A
 part of those who succeeded him were therefore
 sensible of this, and still resolved to support the
 crown, which they regarded as the only declin-
 ing branch of the constitution. Another part who
 clamoured from motives of self-interest, having
 now attained the object of their desires, blundered
 on in the former measures, studious of fortune and
 not

not of fame. In short, his successors pursuing all the former schemes of the deposed minister, presented the political part of the nation with the mortifying prospect of pretended patriotism unstripped of its mask, and shewed the little certainty there is in all political reasonings.

L E T T E R L I X.

THE war with Spain had now continued for several years, with but indifferent success. Some unsuccessful expeditions were carried on in the West Indies under admiral Vernon, commodore Knowles, and others; and these were all aggravated by a set of worthless and mercenary *things*, called *political writers*. A class of beings first employed against Walpole, and afterwards encouraged by him, at the expence, as it is said, of no less than thirty thousand a year. These were men naturally too dull to shine in any of the politer kinds of literature, which adorn either the scholar or the gentleman; and therefore they turned their thoughts to politics; a science on which they might declaim without knowledge, and be dull without detection. These men, I say, had for some time embarrassed the constitution, inflamed the people, and were paid with large pensions from the crown. It was upon this occasion that they exaggerated every misconduct, and drew frightful pictures of the distress and misery which they foreboded to posterity. This clamour, and want of success in a naval war, in which the principal strength of the kingdom lay, induced the new ministry to divert the attention of the public to a war, which might be carried on by land. The king's attachment

attachment to his electoral dominions, contributed still more to turn the current of British indignation that way, and an army was therefore now prepared to be sent into Flanders; the war with Spain being become an object but of secondary consideration.

To have a clear, yet concise, idea of the origin of the troubles on the continent, it will be expedient to go back, for some years, and trace the measures of the European republic to that period where we formerly left them. After the duke of Orleans, who had been regent of France, died, cardinal Fleury undertook to settle that confusion in which the former had left the kingdom. His moderation was equal to his prudence; he was sincere, frugal, modest, and simple. Under him France repaired her losses, and enriched herself by commerce; he only left the state to its own natural methods of thriving, and saw it daily assuming its former health and vigour. During the long interval of peace, which his councils had procured for Europe, two powers, unregarded, now began to attract the notice, and the jealousy of their neighbouring states. Peter the Great had already civilized Russia, and this new extensive empire began to influence the councils of other princes, and to give laws to the North. The other power was that of Prussia, whose dominions were compact and populous, and whose forces were well maintained, and ready for action. The empire continued under Charles VI. who had been placed upon the throne by the treaty of Utrecht. Sweden languished, being not yet recovered from the destructive projects of Charles XII. Denmark was powerful; and part of Italy subject to the masters which had been imposed upon.

upon it by foreign treaties. All, however, continued to enjoy a profound peace, until the death of Augustus, king of Poland, was found again to kindle up the general flame. The emperor Charles VI. assisted by the arms of Russia, declared for the elector of Saxony, son to the deceased king. On the other hand, France declared for Stanislaus, who had been long since elected king of Poland by Charles XII. and whose daughter had been since married to the French king. Stanislaus repaired to Dantzic in order to support his election; ten thousand Russians appearing, the Polish nobility dispersed, and their new elected monarch was shut up, and besieged by so small a number of forces: the city was taken, the king escaped with the utmost difficulty, and fifteen hundred Frenchmen that were sent to his assistance were made prisoners of war. He had now no hopes left but in the assistance of France, which accordingly resolved to give him powerful succours, by distressing the house of Austria. The views of France were seconded by Spain and Sardinia; both hoped to grow more powerful by a division of the spoils of Austria; and France had motives of alliance and revenge. A French army therefore soon overran the empire under the conduct of old marshal Villars; the duke of Montemar, the Spanish general, was equally victorious in the kingdom of Naples; and the Emperor, Charles VI. had the mortification of seeing himself deprived of the greatest part of Italy, for having attempted to give backing to Poland. These rapid successes of France and its allies soon compelled the emperor to demand a peace. By this treaty Stanislaus, upon whose account the war was undertaken, was obliged to renounce all right

to the throne of Poland; and France made some valuable acquisitions of dominion; particularly the Duchy of Lorraine. In the year 1740, the death of the emperor gave the French another opportunity of exerting their ambition. Regardless of treaties, particularly the pragmatic sanction, as it was called, which settled upon the daughter of the emperor the reversion of all his dominions, they caused the elector of Bavaria to be crowned emperor. Thus the daughter of Charles VI. descended from an illustrious line of emperors, saw herself stripped of her inheritance, and, for a whole year, without hopes of succour. She had scarce closed her father's eyes, when she lost Silesia, by an eruption of the young king of Prussia, who seized the opportunity of her defenceless state, to renew his ancient pretensions to that province, of which it must be owned his ancestors had been unjustly deprived. France, Saxony, and Bavaria, attacked the rest of her dominions. In this forlorn situation she found a powerful ally in Britain; Sardinia and Holland soon after came to her assistance; and, last of all, Russia joined in her cause. It may be demanded, What part Britain had in these continental measures? The interests of Hanover; the security and aggrandizement of that electorate, depended upon the proper regulation of the empire. Lord Carteret had now taken that place in the royal confidence which had formerly been possessed by Walpole; and, by pursuing these measures he soothed the wishes of his master, and opened a more extensive field for his own ambition. He expected honour from victories which could produce no good; and campaigns, whether successful or not, that could only terminate in misfortune. When the parliament met, his Majesty

jesty informed them of his strict adherence to his engagements, though attacked in his own dominions; and that he had augmented the British forces in the Low Countries with sixteen thousand Hanoverians. When the supplies came to be considered, by which this additional number of troops was to be paid, it raised violent debates in both houses. It was considered as hiring the troops of the electorate to fight their own cause. The ministry, however, who were formerly remarkable for declaiming against continental measures, now boldly stood up for them; and, at length, by dint of number, carried their cause. The people saw, with pain, their former defenders sacrificing the blood and treasure of the nation upon destructive alliances; they knew not now on whom to rely for safety; and began to think that patriotism was but an empty name. However injurious these measures might have been to the nation, they were of infinite service to the queen of Hungary. She began, at this period, to triumph over all her enemies. The French were driven out of Bohemia. Her general, prince Charles, at the head of a large army, invaded the dominions of Bavaria. Her rival, the nominal emperor, was obliged to fly before her; abandoned by his allies, and stripped of all his dominions, he repaired to Frankfurt, where he lived in indigence and obscurity. He agreed to continue neuter during the remainder of the war; while the French, who first began it as allies, supported the burthen. The troops sent by England to the queen's assistance were commanded by the earl of Stair, an experienced general who had learned the art of war under the famous prince Eugene; and the chief object he had first in view was, to effect a junction with

the

the army commanded by prince Charles of Lorraine. The French, in order to prevent this junction, assembled sixty thousand men upon the river Mayne, under the command *A. D. 1743.* of Marshal Noailles, who posted his troops upon the east side of that river. The British forces, to the number of forty thousand, pushed forward on the other side, while the French, in the mean time, found means to cut off all the communications by which they could be supplied with provisions. The king of England arrived at the camp while the army was in this situation; and seeing it in danger of starving, resolved to proceed forward, to join twelve thousand Hanoverians and Hessians, who had reached Hanau. With this view he decamped; but before the army had marched three leagues, he found the enemy had inclosed him on every side, near a village called Dettingen. In this situation he must have fought at great disadvantage, if he began the attack; and if he continued in the same situation, his army must have perished for want of subsistence. The impetuosity of the French, however, saved his army; they passed a defile which they should have guarded; and, under the conduct of the duke of Gramont, their horse charged with great impetuosity. They were received by the English infantry with undaunted resolution; the French were obliged to give way, and to pass the Mayne with great precipitation, with the loss of about five thousand men. The king, who was possessed of personal courage, which seems hereditary to the family, exposed himself to a severe fire of cannon, as well as musquetry; and, in the midst of the ranks, encouraged his troops, by his presence and example. The whole of the battle,

on

on either side, exhibited more courage than conduct. The English had the honour of the day; but the French soon after took possession of the field of battle, treating the wounded English that were left behind with a clemency unprecedented in ancient history, and that serves to shew how superior the present times are in point of humanity to the boasted ages of antiquity. Though the English were victorious upon this occasion, yet the earl of Stair, who commanded, did not assume any honour from such a victory; he was unwilling that his reputation should suffer for measures which he was not allowed to conduct; he therefore solicited, and obtained leave to resign, and the British troops desisted from further operations that campaign.

Mean while the French went on with vigour on every quarter; they opposed prince Charles of Lorrain, they interrupted his progress in his attempts to pass the Rhine, and gained some successes in Italy; but their chief expectations were placed in a projected invasion of England. Cardinal Fleury was now dead, and Cardinal Tencin succeeded in his place: this was a person of a very different character from his predecessor, being proud, turbulent and enterprising. France, from the violence of parliamentary disputes in England, had been long persuaded that the country was ripe for a revolution, and only wanted the presence of the pretender to induce the majority to declare against the reigning family. Several needy adventurers, who wished for a change; some men of broken fortunes, and almost all the Roman catholics of the kingdom, endeavoured to confirm the court of France in these sentiments. An invasion therefore was actually projected. Charles, son of the

the old Chevalier St. George, departed from Rome in the disguise of a Spanish country and prosecuting his journey to Paris, had an audience of the French king. The troops designed for this expedition amounted to fifteen thousand; preparations were made for embarking them at Dunkirk, and some other of the nearest ports to England, under the eye of the young pretender; and seven thousand of the number actually went on board. The duke de Roquesville, with twenty ships of the line, was to see them landed safely in England; and count Saxe was to command them, when put ashore. The whole project, however, was disconcerted by the appearance of Sir John Norris, with a superior fleet, making up against them; the French fleet was obliged to put back, a very hard gale of wind damaged their transports beyond redress. All hopes of invasion were now frustrated; and at length the French thought fit openly to declare war.

But, though fortune seemed to favour England on this occasion, yet, on others, she was not equally propitious. The combined fleets of France and Spain, for some time, fought the British armament under admiral Matthews and Lestock, though with inferior forces, and came off upon nearly equal terms. Such a parity of success in England was regarded as a defeat. Both the English admirals were tried by a court martial. Matthews, who had fought the enemy with intrepidity, was declared incapable of serving for the future in his majesty's navy. Lestock, who had kept aloof, was acquitted with honour, for he had intrenched himself within the punishments of discipline; he

A.D. 1744.
barely

barely did his duty; a man of honour, when his country is at stake, should do more.

The proceedings in the Netherlands were still more unfavourable. The French had assembled a formidable army of one hundred and twenty thousand men; the chief command of which was given to count Saxe. This general was originally a soldier of fortune, and natural son to Augustus king of Poland, by the famous countess of Konigsmark. He had been bred from his youth in camps, and had shewn the most early instances of cool intrepidity. He, in the beginning of the war, had offered his service to several crowns, and, among the rest, it is said, to that of England; but his offers were rejected. He was possessed of great military talents; and, by long habit, preserved an equal composure in the midst of battle, as in a drawing-room at court. On the other side, the allied forces, consisting of English, Hanoverians, Dutch, and Austrians, did not amount to above seventy thousand. These were incapable of withstanding such a superior force, and commanded by such a general. The French besieged and took Fribourg, before they went into winter-quarters; and early the next campaign invested the city of Tournay. The allies were resolved to prevent the loss of this city by a battle. Their army was inferior, and they were commanded by the duke of Cumberland. Notwithstanding these disadvantages they *A. D. 1745.* marched towards the enemy, and took post in sight of the French, who were incamped on an eminence; the village of Antoine on the right, a wood on their left, and the town of Fontenoy before them. This advantageous situation did not repress the ardour of the English;

lish; on the thirtieth day of April the duke of Cumberland marched to the attack at two o'clock in the morning. The British infantry pressed forward, bore down all opposition, and, for near an hour, were victorious. Marshal Saxe was at that time sick of the same disorder of which he afterwards died. He visited all the posts in a litter, and saw, notwithstanding all appearances, that the day was his own. The English column, without command, by a mere mechanical courage, had advanced upon the enemies lines, which formed an avenue on each side to receive them. The French artillery began to play upon this forlorn body; and, though they continued a long time unshaken, they were obliged to retreat about three o'clock in the afternoon. This was one of the most bloody battles that had been fought this age; the allies left upon the field near twelve thousand slain; and the French bought their victory with near an equal number.

This blow, by which Tournay was taken, gave the French a manifest superiority all the rest of the campaign, which they did not forego during the continuance of the war. The emperor Charles VII. who had been raised to the throne from the dukedom of Bavaria, and for whom the war first began, was now dead; yet this did not in the least restore tranquillity to Europe. The grand duke of Tuscany, husband to the queen of Hungary, was declared emperor upon his decease; but the war between France and the allies still continued; and the original views and interests seemed now quite forgotten, that had at first inspired the contention.

LETTER LX.

THE intended French invasion had roused all the attention of the English ministry; and nothing but loyalty breathed throughout the whole kingdom. The administration of affairs being committed to the earl of Harrington, the earl of Chesterfield, and others, who enjoyed a great share of popularity, the views of the crown were no longer thwarted by an opposition in parliament. The admirals Rowley and Warren had retrieved the honour of the British flag, and made several rich captures. Louisburg, in the island of Cape Breton, in North America, a place of great consequence to the British commerce, surrendered to general Pepperel, while, a short time after, two French East-India ships, and another from Peru, laden with treasure, supposing the place still in possession of the French, sailed into the harbour, and their capture added to the English success. It was in this period of universal satisfaction, that the son of the old pretender resolved to make an effort at gaining the British crown. Young Charles Edward, the adventurer in question, had been bred in a luxurious court without sharing its effeminacy; he was enterprising and ambitious; but, either from inexperience, or natural inability, utterly unequal to the undertaking. He was flattered by the rash, the superstitious, and the needy, that the kingdom was ripe for a revolt; that the people could no longer bear the immense load of taxes, which was daily increasing; and that the most considerable persons in the kingdom would gladly seize the opportunity of crowding to his standard. Being

ing furnished with some money, and still larger promises from France, who fanned this ambition in him, from which they hoped to gain some advantages; he embarked for Scotland on board a small frigate, accompanied by the marquis Tullibardine, Sir Thomas Sheridan, and a few other desperate adventurers. For the conquest of the whole British empire, he brought with him seven officers, and arms for two thousand men. Fortune, which ever persecuted his family, seemed no way more favourable to him; his convoy, a ship of sixty guns, was so disabled in an engagement with an English man of war, called the *Lion*, that it returned to Brest, while he was obliged to continue his course to the western parts of Scotland; and, landing on the coast of Lochabar, July 27, was, in a little time, joined by some chiefs of the Highland clans, and their vassals. These chiefs had ever continued to exercise an hereditary jurisdiction over all their tenants. This power of life and death, vested in the lords of the manor, was a privilege of the old feudal law, long abolished in England, but which had been confirmed to the Scotch lairds at the time of the union. From hence we see, that a chief had the power of commanding all his vassals, and that immediate death was the consequence of their disobedience. By means of these chiefs, therefore, he soon saw himself at the head of fifteen hundred men; and invited others to join him by his manifestoes, which were dispersed throughout all the Highlands.

The boldness of this enterprize astonished all Europe; it awakened the fears of the pusillanimous, the pity of the wise, and the loyalty of all. The whole kingdom seemed unanimously bent upon opposing the enterprize, which they were sensible,

as being supported only by papists, would be instrumental in restoring popery. The ministry was no sooner confirmed of the truth of his arrival, which, at first, they could scarcely be induced to believe, than Sir John Cope was ordered to oppose his progress. In the mean time, the young adventurer marched to Perth, where the unnecessary ceremony was performed of proclaiming the chevalier de St. George, his father, king of Great Britain. The rebel army, descending from the mountains, seemed to gather as it went. They advanced towards Edinburgh, which they entered without opposition. Here too the pageantry of proclamation was performed, August 17, in which he promised to dissolve the union, and redress the grievances of the country. But, though he was master of the capital, yet the citadel, which goes by the name of the *Castle*, a strong fortress built upon a rock, and commanded by general Gues, braved all his attempts. In the mean time, Sir John Cope, who had pursued them to the Highlands, but declined meeting them in their descent, now reinforced by two regiments of dragoons, resolved to march towards Edinburgh, and give them battle. The young adventurer, unwilling to give him time to retreat, attacked him near Preston-pans, about twelve miles from the capital, and in a few minutes, put him and his troops totally to the route. This victory, in which the king lost about five hundred men, gave the rebels great influence; and, had the pretender taken advantage of the general consternation, and marched towards England, the consequence might have been dangerous to the safety of the state; but he spent the time at Edinburgh, seeming to enjoy the useless parade of royalty, pleased at being addressed and treated

treated as a king. By this time, he was joined by the earl of Kilmarnock, the lords Elcho, Ballmerino, Ogilvy, Pictou, and the eldest son of the lord Lovat. This lord Lovat was the same whom we have seen, upon a former occasion, trusted by the old pretender, and betraying him by taking possession of the castle of Stirling for king George. This nobleman, true to neither party, had again altered from his attachment to the house of Hanover, and, in secret, aided the young chevalier; still, only for his own interest, he exerted all the arts of low cunning, to appear an open enemy to the rebellion, yet to give it secret assistance.

While the young pretender thus trifled away the time at Edinburgh, (for all delays in dangerous enterprizes are even worse than defeats) the ministry of Great Britain took every possible measure to defeat his intentions. Six thousand Dutch troops that had come over to the assistance of the crown, were sent northward, under the command of general Wade; but, as it was then said, these could lend no assistance, as they were, properly speaking, prisoners of France, and, upon their parole, not to oppose that power for the space of one year. However this be, the duke of Cumberland soon after arrived from Flanders, and was followed by another detachment of dragoons and infantry volunteers in different parts of the kingdom employed themselves in the exercise of arms; and every county exerted a generous spirit of indignation, both against the ambition, the religion, and the allies of the young adventurer.

It would be inhuman and base, to deny this enterprising youth that praise which his merit may deserve. Though he might have brought civil war, and all the calamities attending it, with him,

into the kingdom; yet we must consider, that he had ever been taught, that having his country in blood was but a just assertion of his right; that altering the constitution, and, perhaps, the religion of his supposed dominions, was a laudable object of ambition. Thus inspired, he went forward with vigour, and resolving to make an irruption into England, he entered it by the western border. On the sixth day of November, Carlisle was invested, and, in less than three days, it surrendered. Here he found a considerable quantity of arms, and was declared king of great Britain. General Wade being apprized of his progress, advanced across the country from the opposite shore; but, receiving intelligence that the enemy were two days march before him, he retired to his former station. The young pretender now resolved to proceed, having received assurances from France, that a considerable body of troops would be landed on the southern coast of Britain, to make a diversion in his favour; and, flattered with the hopes of being joined by a large body of English malcontents, as soon as he should make his appearance among them. Leaving therefore a small garrison in Carlisle, which he should rather have left defenceless, he advanced to Penrith, marching on foot in an Highland garb, and continued his irruption till he came to Manchester, where he established his head-quarters. He was here joined by about two hundred Englishmen, who were formed into a regiment, under the command of colonel Townley. From thence he prosecuted his route to Derby, intending to go by the way of Chester into Wales, where he hoped for a great number of adherents. He was, by this time, advanced within an hundred miles of the capital, which was

filled with terror and confusion. The king resolved to take the field in person. The volunteers of the city were incorporated into a regiment. The practitioners of the law agreed to take the field, with the judges at their head. Even the managers of the theatres offered to raise a body of their dependants for the service of their country. Yet these combinations only served as instances of the national terror; for the trading part of the city, and those concerned in the money corporations were overwhelmed with dejection. They could hope for little safety in the courage or discipline of a militia, especially as they, every hour, dreaded an invasion from France, and an insurrection of the Roman catholics, and other friends to the expelled family. This therefore was the moment for the advancement of the adventurer's enterprize. Had he marched up to the capital, he would undoubtedly have been joined by several, secretly attached to his cause. But he determined to retreat once more to Scotland; and thus his scheme was defeated. In fact, he was but nominally the leader of his forces. His generals, the chiefs of highland clans, were, from their education, ignorant; and, from their independency, obstinate. They each embraced peculiar systems, and began to contend with each other for the pre-eminence; so that after violent disputes, they resolved to march back. They effected their retreat to Carlisle without any loss, and from thence crossed the rivers Eden and Solway into Scotland. In this irruption, however, they preserved all the rules of war; they desisted, in a great measure, from rapine; levied contributions; and, in the usual form, left a garrison in Carlisle in their retreat; which, a short time after, to the number

of four hundred, surrendered, to the duke of Cumberland, prisoners at discretion. The pretender, being returned to Scotland, proceeded to Glasgow, from which city he exacted severe contributions. Advancing to Stirling, he was joined by lord Lewis Gordon, at the head of some forces which had been assembled in his absence. Other clans, to the number of two thousand, came in likewise. Spain sent him some supplies of money, and, in one or two skirmishes with the royalists, his generals came off with victory; so that his affairs once more seemed to wear an aspect of success. Being joined by John lord Drummond, he invested the castle of Stirling, commanded by general Blakeney, but his forces being engaged in sieges, consumed much time to no purpose. General Hawley, who commanded a considerable body of forces near Edinburgh, undertook to raise the siege. He advanced towards the rebel army, and rendezvoused his whole force at Balaik, while the rebels lay incamped at no great distance. After two days, mutually examining each other's strength, the rebels, on the seventeenth day of January, came on in full spirits to attack the king's army. The pretender, who stood in the front line, gave the signal to fire; and the first volley served to put Hawley's forces into confusion. The horse retreated with precipitation; and fell in upon their own infantry; the rebels followed their blow; and the greatest part of the royal army fled with the utmost precipitation. They retired in confusion to Edinburgh, leaving the field of battle, with part of their tents and artillery, to the rebels.

This was the end of all their triumphs. But a new scene of conduct was now going to open, for the duke of Cumberland, at that time the favourite

of

of the English army, had put himself at the head of the troops at Edinburgh, which consisted of about fourteen thousand men. He resolved therefore to come to a battle as soon as possible, and marched forward, while the young adventurer retired at his approach. The duke advanced to Aberdeen, where he was joined by the duke of Gordon, and some other lords, attached to his family and cause. After having refreshed his troops there for some time, he renewed his march; and, in twelve days, came upon the banks of the deep, and rapid river Spey. This was a place where the rebels might have disputed his passage; but they seemed now totally void of all counsel and subordination, without conduct, and without expectation. The duke still proceeded in his pursuit, and, at length, had advice that the enemy had advanced from Inverness to the plain of Culloden, which was about nine miles distant, and there intended to give him battle. On this plain the Highlanders were drawn up in order of battle, to the number of eight thousand men, in thirteen divisions, supplied with some pieces of artillery. The battle began about one o'clock in the afternoon; the cannon of the king's army did dreadful execution among the enemy, while theirs, being but ill served, was ineffectual. One of the great errors in all the pretender's war-like measures, was his subjecting undisciplined troops to the forms of artful war, and thus repressing their native ferocity from which alone he could hope for success. After they had stood the English fire for some time, they, at length, became impatient for closer engagement; and about five hundred of them attacked the English left wing, with their accustomed fierceness. The first line be-

ing endangered by this onset, two battalions advanced to support it, and galled the enemy by a terrible and close discharge. At the same time the dragoons under Hawley, and the Argyleshire militia, pulling down a park wall that guarded the enemy's flank, and which the rebels had left but feebly defended, fell in among them, sword in hand, with great slaughter. In less than thirty minutes they were totally routed, and the field covered with their wounded and slain, to the number of above three thousand men. Civil war is in itself terrible, but still more so when heightened by cruelty. How guilty soever men may be, it is ever the business of a soldier to remember, that he is only to fight an enemy that opposes him, and to spare the suppliant. This victory was in every respect complete; and humanity to the conquered would even have made it glorious. The conquerors often refused mercy to wretches who were defenceless or wounded; and soldiers were seen to anticipate the base employment of the executioner. Thus sunk all the hopes and ambition of the young adventurer; one short hour deprived him of imaginary thrones and scepters, and reduced him from a nominal king to a distressed forlorn outcast, shunned by all mankind, except such as sought to take his life. To the good-natured, subsequent distress often atones for former guilt; and while reason would repress humanity, yet our hearts plead in the favour of the wretched. The duke, immediately after the decisive action at Culloden, ordered six and thirty deserters to be executed; the conquerors spread terror wherever they came; and, after a short time, the whole country round was one scene of slaughter, desolation, and plun-

der's justice, seemed forgotten, and vengeance as-
 sumed the name of law. In the mean time, the unhappy fugitive ad-
 venturers wandered from mountain to mountain,
 a wretched spectator of all these horrors, the re-
 sult of his ill-guided ambition. He now under-
 went a similarity of adventures with Charles II.
 after the defeat at Worcester. He sometimes found
 refuge in caves and cottages, without attendants,
 and exposed to the mercy of peasants, who could
 pity but not support him. Sometimes he lay in
 forests, with one or two companions of his dis-
 tress, continually pursued by the troops of the
 conqueror, as there was thirty thousand pounds
 bid for his head. Smetidan, an Irish adventurer,
 was he who kept most faithfully by him, and in-
 spired him with courage to support such inre-
 ducible hardships. He was obliged to trust his life
 to the fidelity of above fifty individuals. One
 day, having walked from morning till night, pros-
 trated by hunger, and worn with fatigue, he ven-
 tured to a citizen's house, the owner of which he
 well knew was attached to the opposite party. The
 son of the house, said he, entering, comes to beg to
 bid of bread and cloaths. I know your present at-
 tachment to my adversaries, but I believe you have
 sufficient honour not to abuse my confidence, or to take
 the advantage of my misfortune. Take these rags
 that have for some time been my only covering, and
 keep them. You may, probably, restore them to me
 one day, when seated on the throne of the King of
 Great Britain. His host was touched with his
 distress, assisted him as far as he was able, and
 never divulged his secret. In this manner he wan-
 dered among the frightful wilds of Glengary, for
 near six months, often hemmed round by his pur-
 suers,

suers, but still finding some expedient to save him from captivity and death. At length a privateer of St. Malo, hired by his adherents, arrived in Loch-nanach, on which he embarked, and arrived at France in safety.

While the prince thus led a wandering and solitary life, the scaffolds and the gibbets were bathed with the blood of his adherents; seventeen officers of the rebel army were executed at Kennington Common, in the neighbourhood of London, whose constancy in death gained more proselytes to their cause than perhaps their victories could have done. Nine were executed in the same manner at Carlisle; six at Brumpton; seven at Penrith; and eleven at York. A few obtained pardons, and a considerable number were transported to the plantations. The earls of Kilmarnock and Cromartie, with the lord Balmerino, were tried by their peers, and found guilty. Cromartie was pardoned; the other two were beheaded on the Tower Hill. Kilmarnock, either from conviction, or from the hope of a pardon, owned his crime, and declared his repentance of it. On the other hand, Balmerino, who had from his youth up been bred to arms, died in a most daring manner. When his fellow sufferers, as commanded, bid God bless King George, Balmerino still held fast to his principles, and cried out, God bless King James, and suffered with the utmost intrepidity. Lord Lore, and Mrs. Radcliffe, the titulary earl of Derwent, were also executed with equal resolution. Thus ended a rebellion, dictated by youth and presumption, and conducted without art or resolution. The family of Stewart found fortune become more averse at every new solicitation of her favour. Let private men, who complain of

the miseries of this life, only to the virtuous studies in that family, and train to bless God, and be happy.

2. Also, hired by his father, and arrived at a hand, on which he was seated, and arrived at France in safety, and arrived at his home.

While the rebellion was continuing, and the rebels were being

A Rebellion quelled, and mercy shown to the

delinquents, ever strengthens the reigning

cause. How it might have been in the present

instance I will not pretend to determine, whether

too much rigour might have been exerted upon

the conquered, posterity must determine; actions

of this kind are too near our own lines to be left

to be judged of, but talked of with freedom. Im-

mediately after the rebellion was suppressed, the

legislature undertook to establish several regula-

tions in Scotland, which were equally conducive

to the happiness of the people there, and the tran-

quillity of the united kingdom. The Highland-

ers, who had, till this time, continued to wear

the old military dress of the Romans, and who

always went armed, were now reformed. Their

habits were, by act of parliament, reduced to the

modern modes; the obedience they were under

to their chiefs was abolished, and the lowest sub-

ject of that part of the kingdom was granted a

participation of British freedom.

But whatever tranquillity might have been re-

stored by these means at home, the flames of war

still continued to rage upon the continent, with

their accustomed violence. The French went for-

ward with rapid success, having reduced almost

the whole Netherlands to their obedience. In

vain the Dutch negotiated, supplicated, and eva-

ded, but they saw themselves stripped of all these

strong towns which defended their dominions from invasion, and they now lay almost defenceless, ready to receive yokes from their conquerors. The Dutch, at this time, were very different from their forefathers, the brave assertors of liberty; in the beginning of the republic, the individuals of their states were now rich, while the government was poor; they had lost, in a spirit of traffic and luxury, all the generosity of sentiment, and desire of independence; they only sought riches, regardless of public virtues. They were divided in their councils between two factions which now subsisted, namely, that which declared for a Stadtholder, and that which, with attachments to France, opposed his election. The prevalence of either side was almost equally fatal to liberty; if a Stadtholder were elected, they then saw their constitution altered from a republic to a kind of limited monarchy; if the opposite party prevailed, they were to feel the weight of a confirmed aristocracy, confirmed by French power, and cloathing under its authority. Of this two evils they chose the former; the people in several towns, inflamed almost to tumult and sedition, compelled their magistrates to declare for the prince of Orange as Stadtholder, captain-general, and admiral of the United Provinces. The vigorous consequences of this resolution immediately appeared; all commerce with the French was prohibited; the Dutch army was augmented; and orders were issued to commence hostilities against the French by sea and land. As this war diffused throughout the whole system of Europe, in some measure resembling a disorder, the symptoms of which at different times appear in different parts of the body,

remitting and raging by turns. At the commencement of the war, we have seen the queen of Hungary upon the point of losing all her possessions. Soon after we saw the unfortunate duke of Bavaria, who had been chosen emperor by the name of Charles VIII. banished from his throne, stripped of his hereditary dukedom, and shrinking from surrounding dangers. We have seen the duke of Savoy, now king of Sardinia, changing that side which some years before he had espoused, and joining with Austria and England, against the ambitious designs of France, while Italy still felt all the terrors of war, or rather saw foreigners contending with each other for her dominions; the French and Spaniards on one side, the Imperialists and the king of Sardinia on the other. Thus Italy, that once gave laws to the world, now saw the troops of Germany and Spain, by turns, enter into her territories; and, after various combats, she, at last, saw the Imperialists become masters. The Spaniards and French lost the most flourishing armies; notwithstanding the excellent conduct of the prince of Conti, their general; and, at last, after a bloody victory obtained over the Spaniards at St. Lazarro, the beautiful city of Genoa, which had sided with Spain, was obliged to submit to the conquerors, to suffer some indignities imposed upon them, and to pay a most severe contribution. The city of Genoa had, for ages before, maintained its own laws, and boasted of liberty. Besides its inner wall, it had another formed by a chain of rocks of more than two leagues extent; but both being built in those times when modern fortification was yet unknown, it was not thought, by its senate, capable of making a proper resistance.

ance. Upon submitting, the unhappy Italians too soon found that no mercy was to be expected from the court of Vienna, which had ever patronized oppression. More than a million sterling was demanded for a contribution; and, as to the payment of which, must have utterly ruined the city. The magistrates did all in their power to pay the enormous sum demanded; and the German troops exercised every inhumanity in exacting it. The conquerors lived upon the people; and treated them with an insolence which was natural to them as conquerors; and as Germans. The Genoese were, at length, reduced to despair, and were resolved to make a last effort for the recovery of their liberty and independance. The Austrians took the cannon of the city, in order to transport them to Provence, where their arms had already penetrated. The Genoese themselves were obliged to draw those cannon which they had once considered as the defence and ornament of their citadel. It was on this occasion that an Austrian officer struck one of the citizens, who had been employed in this laborious task. This blow served to animate the people with their former spirit of freedom. They took up arms in every quarter of the town, and surprised some battalions of the Austrians, surrounded others, and put them in pieces. The senate, uncertain how to proceed, neither encouraged nor stopped the citizens, who drove the Austrians entirely out; and then appointed commanders, and guarded the walls with the utmost regularity.

This revolution in a little city, the transactions of which has filled whole folios of history, should not be passed over without remark; though no longer capable of maintaining its liberties, amidst

the shock of the enormous powers of Europe; yet still we find it possessed of its ancient spirit; only to lose it, however, by the prevailing power of the senate, which established their aristocracy on the necks of the citizens. as before, 5-10 habnam

In this manner we see victory and misfortune mutually declaring for either; all sides growing more feeble, and none acquiring any real recompence for the losses sustained. in Thun, 1746, about this time, the English made an unsuccessful expedition into France, in order to attack Port l'Orient, in which they came off without any honour. The French gained a considerable victory at Rourcroux in Flanders, over the allies, although it procured them no real advantage, and it cost them a greater number of lives than those whom they obliged to retire. The Dutch, in this general conflict, seemed the greatest losers. A victory gained over the allies at La Feldt served to reduce them to a still greater degree of distrust in their generals, than they had hitherto shewn; but the taking of Bergen-op-Zoom, the strongest fortification of Dutch Brabant, and which put the British in possession of the whole navigation of the Scheldt, threw them almost into despair. But these victories, in favour of France, were counterbalanced with almost equal disappointments. In Italy, the French general, marshal Belleisle's brother, at the head of thirty-four thousand men, attempted to penetrate into Piedmont; but his troops were put to the route, and he himself slain. The French king equipped an unsuccessful armament for the recovery of Cape Breton; and, not discouraged by this failure, fitted out two squadrons, one to make a descent upon the British colonies in America, and the other to assist the operations.

IN THE HISTORY OF ENGLAND,

operations but the Brit. Indians. These, however, were not so much as to be attacked by Anson and War-
 1741. no. 1. of 1741. ren, and a ninth of their ships were
 taken, on Sept. after which Commodore Fox, with six
 ships of war, took above forty French ships laden
 from St. Domingo; and this loss was soon after
 followed by another defeat, which the French fleet
 sustained from Admiral Hawke; in which seven
 ships of the line, and several frigates were taken.
 This variety of success served to make all the
 powers at war heartily desirous of peace. The
 States-General had, for some years, endeavoured
 to stop the progress of a war, in which they could
 gain no advantage, and had also lost. The king
 of France was sensible, that, after conquest, was
 the most advantageous opportunity of proposing
 terms of peace; and even expressed his desire of
 general tranquillity, in a personal conversation with
 Sir John Aisconier, who had been made prisoner in
 this last victory obtained by the French in La Hogue.
 The great success of his admirals at sea, had generals
 misfortune in Italy, the frequent bankruptcies of
 his subjects, the election of a stadtholder in Hol-
 land, who opposed his interests, his views in Ger-
 many entirely frustrated by the elevation of the
 duke of Tuscany to rule the empire; all these con-
 tributed to make him weary of the war. An ac-
 commodation was therefore resolved upon; and the
 contending powers agreed to come to a congress at
 Aix-la-Chapelle, where the earl of Sandwich and
 Sir Thomas Robinson acted as plenipotentiaries
 from the king of Great Britain. This treaty,
 which takes its name from that city, was con-
 eluded on the seventh day of October, a lasting in-
 stance of precipitate counsels and English humility.
 By this it was agreed, that all prisoners, on each
 side,

Italy should be mutually restored, and all con-
 quists given up. That the duchies of Parma,
 Placentia, and Guastalla should be ceded to Don
 Philip, heir apparent to the Spanish throne, and
 his heirs, but in case of his succeeding to the
 crown of Spain, that then these dominions should
 revert to the house of Austria. That the fortifica-
 tions of Dunkirk to the sea should be demolished,
 that the ship annually sent with slaves to the coast
 of Spain should have this privilege continued for
 four years; that the king of Prussia should be re-
 cured in the possession of Silesia, which he had
 conquered; and that the queen of Hungary should
 be secured in her patrimonial dominions. But one
 article of the peace was more displeasing and in-
 flammable to the English than all the rest; for it was
 agreed, that she should give two persons of rank
 and distinction to France as hostages, until restitu-
 tion should be made of all the conquests which
 England possessed of the enemy, either in the East
 or West Indies. This was a mortifying stipula-
 tion; but there was no mention made of the search-
 ing English ships in the American seas, upon
 which the war originally began. The treaty of
 Utrecht had long been a subject of reproach to
 those by whom it was negotiated; but with all
 its faults, the treaty that was just concluded was
 far more despicable and erroneous. The honour
 of the nation was forgotten; its interests left un-
 determined. Yet such was the strange insatiation
 of the multitude, that the treaty of Utrecht was
 held in universal contempt; and this was extolled
 with the highest strain of panegyric. The truth
 is, the people were wearied with repeated disgrace,
 and only expected an accumulation of misfortunes
 by continuing the war. The ministers and their
 emissaries,

OF THE HISTORY OF ENGLAND,

operations but the East-Indies. These, however, were
 not only not taken, but the French fleet, which had been
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 tributed to make him weary of the war. An ac-
 commodation was therefore resolved upon; and the
 contending powers agreed to come to a congress at
 Aix-la-Chapelle, where the earl of Sandwich and
 Sir Thomas Robinson acted as plenipotentiaries
 from the king of Great Britain. This treaty,
 which takes its name from that city, was con-
 cluded on the seventh day of October, and ending in
 France of precipitate counsels and English humility.
 By this it was agreed, that all prisoners on each
 side,

Indes should be mutually restored, and all the con-
 quests given up. That the duchies of Parma,
 Placentia, and Guastalla, should be ceded to Don
 Philip, heir apparent to the Spanish throne, and
 his heirs; but in case of his succeeding to the
 crown of Spain, that then these dominions should
 revert to the house of Austria. That the fortifica-
 tions of Dunkirk to the sea should be demolished,
 that the ship annually sent with slaves to the coast
 of Spain, should have this privilege continued for
 four years; that the king of Prussia should be se-
 cured in the possession of Silesia, which he had
 conquered; and that the queen of Hungary should
 be secured in her patrimonial dominions. But one
 article of the peace was more displeasing and in-
 flammatory to the English than all the rest; for so was
 agreed, that she should give two persons of rank
 and distinction to France as hostages, until restitu-
 tion should be made of all the conquests which
 England possessed of the enemy, either in the East
 or West-Indies. This was a mortifying stipula-
 tion; but there was no mention made of the search-
 ing English ships in the American seas, upon
 which the war originally began. The treaty of
 Utrecht had long been a subject of reproach to
 those by whom it was negotiated; but with all
 its faults, the treaty that was just concluded was
 far more despicable and erroneous. The honour
 of the nation was forgotten; its interests left un-
 determined. Yet such was the strange insatiation
 of the multitude, that the treaty of Utrecht was
 held in universal contempt; and this was extolled
 with the highest strain of panegyric. The truth
 is, the people were wearied with repeated disgrace,
 and only expected an accumulation of misfortunes
 by continuing the war. The ministers and their
 emissaries,

emissaries, about this period, had the art of persuading men to what they thought proper, and represented the circumstances of the nation as flourishing, though the public was groaning beneath an immense load of debt; and though all measures were guided by an ignorant and unconstitutional faction.

LETTER LXII.

THIS peace might, in every respect, be termed only a temporary cessation from general hostilities; though the war between England and France had actually subsided in Europe, yet in the East and West Indies they still carried on hostile operations, both sides equally culpable, yet each complaining of the infraction.

In the mean time, as Europe enjoyed a temporary tranquillity, the people of England expected, and the government promised them, a restitution of those blessings which had been taken from them by a long and obstinate war. A magnificent show was played off upon this occasion, which, though an useless and vain expence, served to amuse the populace, and render them more contented with the late precarious treaty.

The ministry also shewed some desire to promote the commerce of the kingdom; and, for this purpose, a bill was passed for encouraging a British herring fishery, under proper regulations. From such a scheme carried into execution, great advantages were expected to accrue; the Dutch, who had long enjoyed the sole profits arising from it, considered the sea as a mine of inexhaustible wealth. However, experience has shewn that the

English.

English were either incapable of turning this fishery to the same advantage, or that the company was not established with the most strict economy. Private persons have often been found to make fortunes by this fishery, but the company have found themselves considerable losers.

A scheme, which, by many, was thought still more advantageous to the nation, was, *A. D. 1749.* the encouraging those who had been discharged the Army or Navy, to become members of a new colony in North America, called Nova Scotia. To this retreat, it was thought, the waste of an exuberant nation might well be drained off; and here those free spirits might be kept employed, who, if suffered to remain at home, would only prey upon the community. This was a cold climate, and a barren soil, where the English kept a fort and a small garrison, rather to intimidate the neighbouring French, and repress their incroachments, than to derive any advantages from the improvement of trade, or the cultivation of the country. It was here that a scheme was laid for the foundation of a new colony, which might improve the fishery upon that coast, and become a new source of wealth to the mother country. Thus did the nation exchange her hardy and veteran troops for the expectation of precarious wealth. Every colony taken from the parent country serves to lessen its strength; and all the wealth imported into it, after it has become moderately rich, being only used as the instrument of luxury, instead of invigorating the nation, tends to render it more effeminate.

However, it was advertised by authority, that all proper encouragement would be given to such officers and private men, who, being discharged

from

from the service of the government, should be willing to settle in Nova Scotia. Fifty acres of land were granted to every private soldier or seaman, free from taxes for ten years, and then to pay only one shilling a year. Besides this fifty, ten acres more were to be granted to every individual of which each family should consist. Every officer, under the rank of ensign, was to have four score acres; ensigns were to have two hundred, lieutenants three, captains four, and those above that rank six. Such offers failed not to induce numbers to try their fortunes on that desolate coast; and, in a little time, about four thousand adventurers, with their families, were carried thither; a town named Halifax was built; and the colonists left to glean a scanty subsistence from an ungrateful soil. Since that time, notwithstanding all the encouragement this colony has received from the government, the inhabitants have cleared but a very small part of the woods with which the face of the country is covered. Agriculture is quite forsaken; and the settlement entirely subsists by the sums expended by the army and navy stationed in that part of the western world.

Here however those voluntary outcasts of their country expected to live, though hardly, yet at least securely; but, in this they A. D. 1754 found themselves disappointed. The Indians, a savage and fierce people, from the first looked upon these settlements of the English as an incroachment upon their own liberties; and the French, who were equally jealous, fomented these suspicions. Commissaries were therefore appointed to meet at Paris, and compromise these disputes; but these conferences were rendered abortive by mutual cavillings, and all the arts of evasion.

IN A SERIES OF LETTERS.

In the mean time Mr. Pelham, who chiefly conducted the business of the state, and was esteemed a man of candor and capacity, laid a scheme for lightening the immense load of debt that was laid upon the nation. His plan was to lessen the national incumbrance, by lowering the interest which had been promised upon the first raising the supply, or obliging the lenders to receive the sums originally granted. Those who were proprietors of stocks, and received, for the use of their money, four *per cent.* were, by royal authority, ordered to subscribe their names, signifying their consent to accept of three pounds ten shillings *per cent.* a year after, and three *per cent.* only about six years after their thus subscribing; and, in case of a refusal, that the government would pay off the principal.

This scheme was attended with the desired effect, though it, in some measure, was a force upon the lender, who had originally granted his money upon different terms, yet it was salutary to the nation; and, as Machiavel has it, political influence is sometimes allowable, in order to secure national benefits. Besides this salutary measure, others were pursued by the minister at the helm, with equal success. The importation of iron from America was allowed, and the trade to Africa laid open to the whole nation; but at the same time, to be superintended by the board of trade and plantation.

But all the advantages the nation reaped from these salutary measures, were not sufficient to counterbalance the stroke which liberty received (as some are of opinion) by an unusual stretch of the privileges of the house of commons. As this is a point which deserves the strictest attention, permit me to trace it to its source. The city of Westminster

had

had long been represented by members who were humiliated, in some measure, by the ministry; lord Trentham having vacated his seat in the house, by accepting a place under the crown; again declared himself a candidate; but met with violent opposition. It was objected to him by some, that he had been uncommonly active in introducing some French strollers, who had come over to exhibit plays upon the suppression of our own. This accusation, whether true or false, excited numbers against him, who styled themselves the independent electors of Westminster, and named Sir George Vandeput, a private gentleman, as his competitor. The opposition resolved to support their candidate at their own expence. They accordingly opened houses of entertainment, solicited votes, and propagated abuse as usual. At length, the poll being closed, the majority appeared in favour of lord Trentham; a scrutiny was demanded by the other side; it was protracted by the obstinacy of both parties; but this also turning out in favour of lord Trentham, the independent electors petitioned the house, complaining of an undue election, and of partiality and injustice of the high-bailiff of Westminster, who took the poll. To this petition the house paid little regard, but proceeded to examine the high-bailiff as to the causes that had so long protracted the election, who laid the blame upon Mr. Crowle, who had acted as council for the petitioners, as also on the honourable Alexander Murray, and one Gibson an apothecary. These three persons were therefore brought to the bar of the house; Crowle and Gibson, after having asked pardon upon their knees, and, being reprimanded by the house, were dismissed. Murray was first admitted to bail; but, after some witness-
nesses

nesses had deposed, that he had headed a mob to intimidate the voters; it was voted that he should be committed a close prisoner to Newgate; and, to invigorate their measures, that he should receive this sentence at the bar of the house on his knees. He accordingly appeared; but being directed by the speaker to kneel, refused to comply. This refusal threw the whole house into a commotion; and it was ordered that he should be committed close prisoner to Newgate, debarred the use of pen, ink, and paper, and that no person should have access to him without permission of the house. This imprisonment he underwent, sensible by the constitution it could continue no longer than while they continued to sit; and, at the close of the session, he was conducted from prison to his own house, amidst the acclamations of the people. He now was thought, by many, intirely free from all farther prosecution; but, in this, they were mistaken; for, at the opening of the ensuing session, a motion was made, that Mr. Murray should be again committed close prisoner to the Tower. Hitherto it was supposed by several, that the house of commons had acted with a spirit of resentment. Now it was thought, that they made an attempt at extending their privileges. Though the delinquent, a person of no great consequence in himself, had taken the prudent precautions of retiring from their resentment, yet several of the people saw that the house considered itself rather as a body distinct from the people, than the guardians of the people; and instead of maintaining the liberties of the subject in general, had attempted to increase their own. Some thought they saw, in this measure, the seeds of future aristocracy; that the house of commons constituted themselves judges of their own privileges;

leges; and that the liberty of every individual in society was at the disposal of a body who professed acting chiefly for their own honour.

However this may be, another measure was soon after taken, which, in reality, made distinctions among the people, and laid an unpalatable line between the rich and poor. This was an act for the better preventing clandestine marriages, and for the more public solemnization of that ceremony. The grievance complained of, and which this law was to redress, was, that the sons and daughters of opulent families were often seduced into marriage, before they had acquired sufficient experience in life to be sensible of the disparity of fortune in the match. This statute therefore enacted, that the bans of marriage should be regularly published three successive Sundays in the church of the parish where both parties had resided for one month at least before the ceremony. That a marriage which was solemnized without this previous publication, or a license obtained from the bishop's court, should be void, and the person who solemnized it should be transported for seven years. This act was, at that time, thought replete with consequences injurious to society; and experience has manifested some of them; villains have gone about deceiving ignorant women, under a pretence of marriage, and then have left them without redress. The poor were thus rendered utterly incapable of making alliances with the rich; and the wealth of the nation has thus been more liable to accumulation in opulent families. It has been thought to impede that ardour which impels many to marry; and to clog a ceremony of the most infinite advantage to society, with procrastination and delay. Some have affirmed, that debaucheries

debaucheries and lowliness have become more frequent since the enacting this law, and it is believed, that the numbers of the people are upon the decline.

This session of parliament was also distinguished by another act equally unpopular, and, perhaps, equally injurious to the religion of the community. This was a law for naturalizing the Jews. The ministers boldly affirmed, that such a law would greatly contribute to the advantage of the nation; that it would increase the credit and commerce of the kingdom, and set a laudable example of political toleration. Many others, however, were of very different sentiments; they saw that greater favour was shewn by this bill, to Jews, than to some other sects professing the Christian religion; that an introduction of this people into the kingdom would disgrace the character of the nation, and cool the zeal of the natives already too lukewarm. However, notwithstanding all opposition, this bill was passed into a law; nor was it till the ensuing session of parliament, that it was thought necessary to be repealed.

An act, equally unpopular with the two former, was now also passed, which contained regulations for the better preserving the game. By this noble but men already possessed of a stated fortune, had a privilege of carrying a gun, or destroying game, though even upon the grounds which he himself rented. This totally damped all that martial spirit among the lower orders of mankind, by preventing their handling those arms which might one day be necessary to defend their country; and gave the rich the sole enjoyment of a pleasure, which, before, had been considered as the common privilege of humanity. Such were the laws passed this session;

through all which a spirit of aristocracy was discerned by some. The body of the nobles, who no longer fearing oppression from the throne, or an infringement of their own liberties, now began to lean heavy upon the poor, and to consider the interests of that useful part of society, as intirely distinct from their own. They never omitted, however, their usual addresses to the throne, and this session was remarkable for an address of thanks to his majesty for maintaining, and rendering permanent, the general tranquillity of Europe, at a time when war was kindling in almost every quarter of the world.

LETTER LXXII.

IF we seek for the origin of the war which now began to threaten universal devastation, we shall find it kindling up in several countries, both of Europe, America, and Asia, at one and the same time. Most other national contests have arisen from some one principal cause; but this war seems to have been produced by the concurrence of several, or it may be considered as the continuance of the late war, which had not been effectually extinguished by the defective treaty of Aix la Chapelle.

In Asia, upon the coast of Malabar, the English and French had never ceased hostilities. The claims of Prussia and Austria, upon the territories of Silesia, had never been thoroughly adjusted. The limits of Nova Scotia, inhabited by the English, and bordered upon by the French, were never precisely determined; and, southward, the bound-

daries of Arcadia, an extensive country belonging to the French, and bordering upon Virginia, were equally left uncertain. Negotiations had long been carried on to determine these differences; but what could reason do in determining disputes in which there were no certain principles to be guided by? The limits of these countries had never been settled; for they were, before this time, thought too remote, or too insignificant, to employ much attention. And it was not probable that powers who had no other right to the countries in dispute, but that of invasion, would have equity enough to agree upon sharing the spoil.

The right which any of the contending powers pretended to, might, in the eye of reason, be thought very controvertible; but the convenience which either party was to derive from the enjoyment of their peculiar claims was not so uncertain. As the dissensions seemed to begin in North America, we must turn to that country to consider their rise. The French had been the first cultivators of Nova Scotia, and, by great industry and long perseverance, rendered that soil, naturally barren, somewhat more fertile, and capable of sustaining nature with very little assistance from Europe. This country, however, had frequently changed masters, until the English were acknowledged as the rightful possessors by the treaty of Utrecht. The possession of this country, in any other nation, would expose our colonies to perpetual invasion, and assist them in acquiring a superiority in commerce, and the northern fisheries. It has been already observed, that we had an infant colony upon that coast, which was chiefly supported by royal bounty, and struggled with all the disadvantages of the severe climate, and the

ungrateful foil. But it had an obstruction to its growth still more formidable than either. The French, who had been long settled in the back parts of the country, continually spirited up the Indians to repel the new comers, so that some of them were actually murdered, or sold to the French at Louisburg. These violations were complained of, and complaint produced retribution, so that the two powers of France and England were negotiating with, accusing, and destroying each other all at one time.

Now also began to be observed another source of dispute, which promised as much uneasiness as the former. The French, pretending first to have discovered the mouth of the river Mississippi, claimed the whole adjacent country towards New Mexico on the east, and quite to the Apalachian mountains on the west. And finding several Englishmen, who had settled beyond these mountains, both from motives of commerce, and invited by the natural beauties of the country, they drove them away, and built such forts as could command the whole country around. It was now, therefore, seen, that their intentions were to surround the English colonies, which lay along the shore, by taking possession of the internal parts of the country that lay on the back of our settlements; and being already possessed of the northern and southern shores, thus to inclose us on every side, and secure to themselves all trade with the natives of the country. The English therefore justly apprehended, that if the French were able to unite their northern colonies, which were traded into by the river St. Lawrence, to their southern, which were accessible by the river Mississippi, they must, in time, become masters of the whole territory;

ritory; and, by having a wide country to increase in, would soon multiply, and become every year more dangerous.

The government of England having long complained of these incroachments, determined, at length, to repel force by force, and to cut the knot of negotiation, which they could not untie. Orders were dispatched to the governors of the provinces to unite into a confederacy for their mutual security; and, if possible, to bring the Indians over to their cause. The Indians were a fierce savage people, unacquainted with the arts of peace, and from infancy trained to the practice of war. It had long been the method of the English to cultivate their friendship in times of danger, but to slight their alliance in circumstances of tranquillity; this, in some measure, served to alienate their affections from our government; but the fraud and avarice of our merchants, particularly of that called the *Ohio company*, who sold them bad merchandizes, and treated them with equal insolence and perfidy, served to confirm their aversion. Besides, there was something in the disposition of the French settlers in these regions more similar to theirs; the French, like the natives, were hardy, enterprizing, and poor; they naturally therefore joined with those allies, from conquering of whom they could expect no plunder; and declared against the English colonists, who were rich, frugal, and laborious, and whose spoils they consequently were the more desirous to share.

Thus then the English had not only the French, but almost the whole body of the Indian nations to oppose; yet this confederacy against them did not give a greater union to the different provinces, whose interest it was to oppose. Some of the

provinces, who, from their situation, had little to fear from the enemy, or little advantages to expect from victory, declined furnishing their share of the supplies; the governors of some other colonies, who had been men of broken fortunes, and had come from their native country to retrieve them by acts of rapacity and oppression here, were so much dreaded or hated, that they lost all influence in inspiring the colonists with a proper spirit of defence. The ministry, however, at home, began to exert itself for their defence, and their measures were hastened by hostilities already commenced, there having been, for some time, a skirmishing between General Lawrence to the north, and colonel Washington to the south, with parties of the French, in which the latter were victorious. It would be tedious, as well as uninforming, to relate all the preparations that now began to be made by either party; or to load this account with barbarous names and unimportant marches; or to recount the alternate victories and defeats of either side; be it sufficient to observe, that they seemed, in some measure, to have imbibed a ferocity of manners from the savage people, with whom they fought, and exercised various cruelties, either from a spirit of reprisal or cruelty.

Four operations were undertaken by the English at the same time; one commanded *A. D. 1756.* by colonel Monckton, to drive the French from the incroachments they had made upon the province of Nova Scotia; another on the south, against Crown Point, under the command of general Johnson; a third commanded by general Shirley, against Niagara; and a fourth still farther to the south, against Du Quesne, under

under the conduct of general Braddock. In these respective expeditions Monckton was successful; Johnson victorious, though without effect; Shirley was thought dilatory, and his expedition deferred to another season; but the fortunes of Braddock are so extraordinary as to require a more ample detail. This general was recommended to this service by the duke of Cumberland, who was justly sensible of his courage, and knowledge in the art of war. These two advantages, however, which, upon other occasions, are thought the highest requisites of a general, were, in some measure, conducive to this commander's overthrow. His courage made him obstinate; and his skill in war was improper to be exerted in a country where there were no regular advances to be made, nor a marshalled enemy to encounter. This brave but unfortunate man set forward upon his expedition in June, and left Fort Cumberland on the tenth, at the head of two thousand two hundred men, directing his march to that part of the country where general Washington had been defeated the year before. Upon his arrival there he was informed, that the French at fort Du Quesne expected a reinforcement of five hundred men; he therefore resolved, with all haste, to advance, and attack them, before they became too powerful by this assistance. Leaving therefore, colonel Dunbar, with eight hundred men, to bring up the provisions, stores, and heavy baggage, as fast as the nature of the service would permit, he marched forward with the rest of his army through a country equally dangerous from its forests and savage inhabitants; a country where Europeans had never before attempted to penetrate, wild, solitary, and hideous. Still, however, he advanced

ed with intrepidity, through the desarts of Oswego, regardless of the enemy's attempts, taking no care previously to explore the woods and thickets, as if the nearer he approached the enemy, the less regardful he was of danger. At length, on the eighth of July, he encamped within ten miles of fort Du Quesne, which he intended to attack, and the next day resumed his march, without so much as endeavouring to get intelligence of an enemy he despised. With this confidence he was marching forward; his soldiers promising themselves a speedy cessation from their harrassing march, and all things seemed to promise success. But upon a sudden his whole army was astonished by a general discharge of arms, from an unseen enemy, along the front and left flank. It was now too late to think of retreating; his troops had passed into the defile, which the enemy had artfully permitted before they attempted to fire. His van guard therefore fell back, in consternation, upon the main body; and the panic soon became general. The officers alone disdained to fly, while Braddock himself, at their head, discovered the greatest intrepidity, and the highest imprudence; he never thought of retreating, but obstinately continued on the spot where he was, and gave orders to the few brave men who surrounded him, to form according to the rules of war, and regularly advance against the enemy. An enthusiast to the discipline of the field, he desired to bring the spirit of a German campaign into the wilds of Niagara. In the mean time, his officers fell thick about him, while he still continued to issue out orders with composure, though he had five horses shot under him, and though the whole body of his troops was fled. At length, receiving a musket shot through the lungs,

lung, he dropped, and a total confusion ensued. All the artillery, ammunition, and baggage, of the army, were left to the enemy; the general's cabinet of letters also shared the same fate; the loss of the English, in this unhappy surprize, amounted to seven hundred men; and the remainder of the army, some time after, returned to Philadelphia. It was in this manner, the expedition of general Braddock terminated; from which England had expected such advantages. In all actions, that excite the applause and admiration of mankind, a part of their success is owing to conduct, and a part to fortune. Of the latter Braddock was totally forsaken; he was unsuccessful; and the ungrateful world are unwilling to grant him the former.

Thus unfortunate were the beginnings of this war, with regard to England; it was resolved therefore, that no measures were now to be preferred with the French; and orders were given to take their ships wherever found, though there was yet no formal declaration of war. With this order the naval commanders very readily and willingly complied, so that soon the English ports were filled with ships taken from the enemy, and kept as an indemnification for those forts which the enemy had unjustly possessed themselves of in America. The French complained loudly against the injustice of this proceeding; they represented it to the rest of Europe, as a breach of that faith which should be observed among nations, as a piratical measure, disgraceful to the most savage people. Their memorials were answered by the English, with some shew of reason. However, it must be owned, that as a declaration of war was a ceremony easily performed, it would have been

more consistent with the honour of the ministry, to have pursued the usual methods of contest which had been long established in Europe. The truth is, the ministry were now divided between peace and war; they saw the necessity of vigorous measures, but they were afraid to throw off the mask of peace entirely. Henry Pelham, who had long guided at the helm of affairs with candour and capacity, had for some time been dead, and his place supplied by Sir Thomas Robinson, who, though a sensible minister, and a favourite of the king, was of no great weight in council, and, consequently, soon under a necessity of resigning; and Mr. Fox was put in his place. The administration was also new formed, in other respects, by the taking in several other new members. Those who had long been in the ministry, were, it is thought, for peace; those, on the contrary, who were newly taken into the direction of affairs, expected to supplant their rivals by an opposite system, and were consequently for war. The leader of this party, therefore, warmly solicited for war, seconded by the justice of the cause, and the general voice of the people; those who opposed him expected to effect by negotiation all that arms could achieve. Whatever might have been the motives for protracting the declaration, the French seemed to convince Europe of their moderation upon this attack by neither declaring war, nor making any reprisals. However, they threatened England with a formidable invasion; several bodies of troops moved to the coasts adjacent to ours; their ministers exclaimed loudly in foreign courts; and such preparations were made as shewed a resolution of carrying the war into the heart of Great Britain. These preparations had the desired effect,

filling

filling the nation with consternation, turbulence, and clamour. The people saw themselves exposed without arms, leaders, or discipline, while the ministry were timid, unpopular, and wavering. In this situation the Dutch were applied to for six thousand men, which, by treaty, they were to send England, in case of its being threatened with an invasion. Which demand, however, by affected delays, was put off so long, that the king, unwilling to come to an open rupture with the republic, desisted from it; for which they returned his majesty thanks. Such are the advantages England is to expect, from relying on assistance from any other quarter than its native strength and unanimity; and every day seems to convince us of the absurdity of political alliances, which are never observed, as wanting friendship to bind, or force to compel.

In this timid situation the ministry were eager to catch at any assistance; a body therefore of Hessians and Hanoverians, amounting to about ten thousand, were brought over to protect about as many millions of Englishmen, who, with swords in their hands, were able to defend themselves; but such was the vile complexion of this period, that the whole kingdom presented nothing but one picture of discontent, terror, and distrust. The ministry was execrated for having reduced the nation to such circumstances of disgrace, as to be thought to stand in need of preservation from a few German mercenaries; but what could be expected from such a ministry, who were possessed neither of the arts, nor the integrity of government.

However, the French were by no means serious in this intended descent; their only design was to

to draw off the attention of the English ministry
 from an expedition which was actually going for-
 ward against Minorca, an island in the Mediter-
 ranean, which we had formerly taken from Spain,
 and had been secured to us by repeated treaties. But
 the ministry of England were too much infected
 with the more domestic terror, to take sufficient
 precautions to guard this place, though they had
 early notice of the enemies intentions. In-
 stead therefore of sufficiently securing the island
 with a proper garrison, or of detaching a squadron
 that, in all respects, should be superior to the
 French fleet in the Mediterranean, they only sent
 ten men of war upon this service, poorly manned
 and indifferently provided, under the command of
 Admiral Byng, whose character in the navy was
 by no means established, with orders to reinforce
 the garrison of St. Philip's with one battalion from
 Gibraltar: this command, however, the governor
 of that place thought it unsafe to obey. The
 admiral sent upon this service reinforced
 his fleet by a detachment of men at Gibraltar;
 and, sailing towards Minorca, was joined in the
 way by another man of war, from whom he learn-
 ed that Minorca was actually besieged, and the
 French fleet destined to support the operations by
 land. He soon knew the reality of this information,
 when, approaching the island, he saw the French
 banners displayed, and the batteries opened against
 the castle of St. Philip's, upon which was still
 displayed the English flag. The appearance of
 the French fleet, soon after, still more strongly
 engaged his attention; he drew up his ships in
 line of battle, and determined to act upon the de-
 fensive. Byng had been formerly thought emi-
 nent in naval operations, to which he was early
 bred,

tried, but he had hitherto exhibited no proofs of courage. Men are generally most apt to pride themselves upon those talents for which they are most praised; and this was the case with this unfortunate commander; he sacrificed his reputation for courage, to the hopes of being applauded for his conduct. The French fleet advanced; a part of the English fleet engaged; the admiral still kept aloof, giving prudent reasons for his remissness in coming to action; till, at length, the French admiral, taking the advantage of the Englishman's hesitation, sailed slowly away to join the van of his fleet, which had been already discomfited. The English, for a while, continued the pursuit; but the opportunity of coming to a close engagement was now lost, and never presented itself again.

Byng was still resolved to act with his usual caution; he called a council of war, wherein it was represented that he was much inferior to the enemy in ships and men; that the relief of Minorca was impracticable; and that it was most advisable to sail back to Gibraltar, which might require immediate protection. This representation was almost unanimously agreed to, and put accordingly in execution. His pusillanimous conduct, however, soon reached his native country, where it excited almost a phrenzy of resentment. The ministry were also thought to fan the flame, which served to turn the public eye from their own misconduct in sending so weak an armament. Byng, in the mean time, remained at Gibraltar, no way suspecting the storm that was gathering at a distance; but talked, and wrote, even as if he expected the thanks of his king, and the applause of his countrymen; but he was soon awaked from

this dream, by a letter from the ministry, giving him notice, that he was recalled; and another soon after, by which directions were given that he should be sent home under arrest. Upon his arrival in England, he was committed a close prisoner to Greenwich hospital, and numberless arts used to inflame the populace against him. Long before his trial, several addresses were sent up from different counties, crying out for justice against the delinquent. The industry of his friends, however, was not remiss upon this occasion; they expostulated with the multitude, and attempted to divert the whole of universal hatred upon the ministry, who, at worst, only deserved a share. But, soon after, the news of the surrender of fort St. Philip to the French inflamed the people beyond all measure. This fortress had been reckoned, next to Gibraltar, the strongest in Europe, the works having been planned by the celebrated Vauban; and, both from the nature of the soil, which was one solid rock, and the peculiarity of the situation, it was thought almost impregnable. In order to make themselves masters of this important fortress, the French, under the command of the duke de Richelieu, landed near twenty thousand men, which, by continual assault, and having gained an outwork, at last made themselves masters of the place. The English governor, General Blakeney, however, had very honourable terms of capitulation, and marched out with all the ensigns of war. Yet, perhaps, in truth, the harder the conditions a garrison is obliged to accept, the more honourable it is to the commander, as they denote his extremity in being reduced to accept of them.

The English now saw themselves every where defeated;

defeated; in America their armies were cut in pieces; in Europe their garrisons taken; the people trembling under the dread of an invasion, a few mercenaries brought in for their defence, who, in turn, became formidable to the natives; all these circumstances concurred to exasperate the people; but there was no object on whom to wreck their vengeance, but the unhappy Byng, who, in a manner, was already voted to destruction. War was now proclaimed with the usual solemnity, though it was now but a denunciation after having struck the blow. The Hanoverians were sent back to their own country, and the preparations were made for trying admiral Byng in the usual form. On the twenty-eighth day of December his trial began before a court-martial, in the harbour of Portsmouth, where, after a scrutiny of several days, his judges came to a resolution, that he had not done his utmost, during the engagement, to destroy the enemy, which it was his duty to have engaged. They therefore unanimously were of opinion, that he fell under the twelfth article of war, which positively ordered death to any person who, in the time of action, should withdraw, keep back, or not come into fight, or who should not do his utmost, through either motives of cowardice, negligence, or disaffection. He was therefore adjudged to be shot on board whatever ship the lords of the admiralty should please to direct; but his judges, at the same time, recommended him to mercy; as they could not tell the motives of his keeping aloof. By such a sentence they expected to have satisfied the national animosity against him, and yet to have screened themselves from the consciousness of severity. Whatever the government might wish

wish to do is uncertain; but the cry of vengeance was too loud to be disregarded! his Majesty therefore referred the sentence to the twelve judges, who were unanimously of opinion that the sentence was legal; wherefore the king resolved that he should suffer the extremity of the law. Still, however, there was another attempt made to save him: One of those who had been his judges at Portsmouth, and who was also a member of the house of commons, informed that assembly, that he, as well as some others who had sat upon the admiral's trial, desired to be released from the oath of secrecy imposed upon courts-martial, that they might disclose the grounds on which sentence of death had passed upon admiral Byng, and perhaps discover such circumstances as might shew the sentence to be improper. To this the house paid little regard; but his majesty thought fit to respite the execution, till the scruples of the court-martial should be more clearly explained. A bill therefore passed the house of commons for releasing them from their oath; but when it came to be debated among the lords, and after the members of the court-martial were examined touching their reasons, the Peers found no reason for passing the bill; and it was rejected. The admiral being thus abandoned to his fate, resolved at least, by the bravery of his death, in some measure, to shew the injustice of the imputation of his being a coward. He maintained to the last his natural serenity; and, on the day fixed for his execution, when the boats belonging to the fleet, being manned and armed, attended this solemnity in the harbour, the admiral advanced from the cabin, where he had been imprisoned, to the deck, the place appointed for execution,

execution, with a composed step, and resolute countenance. He then delivered a paper, containing the following address: *A few moments will now deliver me from virulent persecution, and frustrate the malice of my enemies. Nor need I envy them a life subject to the sensations my injuries, and the injustice done me, must create. Persuaded I am, that justice will be done to my reputation hereafter. The manner and cause of raising and keeping up the popular clamour, and prejudice against me, will be seen through. I shall be considered as a victim destined to divert the indignation and resentment of an injured and deluded people from the proper objects. My enemies themselves must now think me innocent. Happy for me, at this my last moment, that I know my own innocence, and am conscious that no part of my country's misfortunes can be owing to me. I heartily wish the shedding my blood may contribute to the happiness and service of my country; but I cannot resign my just claim to a faithful discharge of my duty, according to the best of my judgment, and the utmost exertion of my ability for his majesty's honour, and my country's service. I am sorry that my endeavours were not attended with more success; and that the armament under my command proved too weak to succeed in an expedition of such moment. Truth has prevailed over calumny and falsehood, and justice has wiped off the ignominious stain of my personal want of courage, and the charge of disaffection. My heart acquits me of these crimes; but who can be presumptuously sure of his own judgment? If my crime is an error of judgment, or differing in opinion from my judges; and if yet the error of judgment should be on their side, God forgive them, as I do; and may the distress of their minds, and uneasiness of their consciences, which, in justice to me, they have represented, be relieved,*

lived, and subside, as my resentment has done. The supreme Judge sees all hearts and motives, and to him I must submit the justice of my cause. When he had delivered these words, he came forward, and resolved to die with his face uncovered; but, his friends representing that his looks might possibly intimidate the soldiers, and prevent their taking proper aim, he had his eyes bound with an handkerchief, and kneeling upon deck, the signal was given for the soldiers to fire, and he dropped down dead in an instant.

How far this unfortunate man was innocent, or culpable, we stand too near the transaction to judge; if he erred in point of judgment only, it might have been a proper cause for his dismissal; but it would have been cruelty to condemn him for it. Those who plead with the greatest vehemence against him, seem, however, at present, to bring their arguments from the necessity there was of making some one commander an example to give greater resolution to the rest, and from the good effects that seemed to attend his execution, by our repeated successes after it. These, however, are such reasons as may silence, but not satisfy; we must be contented therefore, to reflect tacitly upon this transaction, and to let posterity do the rest.

When the king was at sea, he was informed that the fleet was dispersed, and that the enemy had taken possession of the coast. He immediately ordered the fleet to be reformed, and sent the fleet to sea. The fleet was reformed, and the enemy was driven off the coast. The king was then informed that the fleet was dispersed, and that the enemy had taken possession of the coast. He immediately ordered the fleet to be reformed, and sent the fleet to sea. The fleet was reformed, and the enemy was driven off the coast.

LETTER LXIV.

EUROPE has often been compared to one republic, obeying one law, namely, that of nations; and composed of provinces, each of which is prevented from becoming too great by the universal jealousy of the rest. A quarrel therefore between any two of these is apt to involve the whole in war; but, particularly, if the dispute happens to arise between those who are reckoned the leading powers in this assemblage of nations. A war begun between France and England, for a desert and trackless wild in the remote parts of America, seemed now spreading fast through the whole world; and the appearance of their commotions revived all the ancient jealousies and claims among the rest.

The French, at the breaking out of this new war, though they were successful in its commencement, were very sensible that they could not long hold their acquisitions against such a superiority as the English were possessed of at sea, and the numberless resources they had of assisting their colonies with all the necessaries of war. Being therefore apprized that a naval war must, in the end, turn out to their disadvantage, they made no scruple of declaring that they would revenge the injuries they sustained in their colonies, or by sea, upon the king of England's territories in Germany, which they secretly hoped would be a motive to his complying with their demands, or dividing the English forces, or draining their finances with heavy subsidies, as they knew his affection for his native country. In these hopes
they

they were not much disappointed: the court of London immediately, to secure the electorate of Hanover, entered into a treaty with the empress of Russia, by which a body of fifty-five thousand men should be ready to act in the English service, in case Hanover should be invaded, for which the Russian empress was to receive an hundred thousand pounds annually, to be paid in advance.

His Prussian majesty had long considered himself as the guardian of the interests of Germany, and was startled at this treaty. The monarch upon the throne was Frederic III, a prince adorned with all the arts of peace, and whom you have seen also acting as the most consummate general. He had learned to read men, by being himself bred in the school of adversity; and to love his subjects, by having experienced their attachment. He therefore took the first opportunity to declare, that he would not suffer any foreign forces to enter the empire, either as auxiliaries or principals. This consummate politician had, it seems, been already apprized of some secret negotiations between the Austrians, whom he looked upon as concealed enemies, and the Russians, for entering his dominions, and stripping him of the province of Silesia, which had been conceded to him in the last treaty of peace. His Britannic majesty, whose fears for Hanover guided all his councils, now saw himself in the very situation he most dreaded, exposed to the resentment of France and Prussia, either of which could at once invade and overrun his electorate, while his Russian allies lay at too great a distance to assist him. However, all he wished was to keep the enemy out of Germany; and this the king of Prussia made a profession of doing, as well as he. From the similitude of their

their intentions, therefore, these two monarchs were induced to unite their interests, and as they both only desired the same thing, they came to an agreement to assist each other mutually in keeping all foreign forces out of the empire.

From this alliance both powers hoped great advantages: the preserving the peace of Germany was the apparent good, but each had other peculiar benefits in view. The king of Prussia knew the Austrians to be his enemies, and the Russians to be in league with them against him; an alliance therefore with the court of London, kept back the Russians whom he dreaded, and gave him hopes of taking an ample satisfaction from Austria, whom he suspected. As for France, he counted upon it as a natural ally, which, from the long and hereditary enmity with the Austrians, could not, by declaring against him, join them to whom they had such various reasons for political aversion. The elector of Hanover, on the other hand, had still stronger expectations of the benefits that would arise from this alliance. He thus procured a near and powerful ally; an ally which he thought the French, in their present circumstances, would not venture to disoblige; he counted upon the Austrians as naturally attached to his interests by former services and friendship; and the Russians, at least, as likely to continue neutral, from their former stipulations and subsidy. Such were the motives to this alliance; but both were deceived in every particular. And though this alliance astonished Europe at that time, it soon produced another connexion still more extraordinary. The Austrian queen had long meditated designs of recovering Silesia, which, in her exigency,

exigency, the king of Prussia had invaded, and expected the assistance of Russia to effect her purposes. By this last treaty, however, she saw England joining with Prussia in frustrating her hopes; and, deprived of one ally, she sought about, in order to substitute another. She therefore applied to France; and to procure the friendship of that power, gave up her barrier in the Netherlands, which England had been for ages acquiring with its blood and treasure. By this extraordinary revolution the whole political system of Europe assumed a new face, and it pretty clearly shews that events guide the politician, while the politician seldom guides events; or to use the words of Tacitus, there is but very little difference between the art and its fatality.

In the mean time, this treaty between France and Austria was no sooner ratified, than the empress of Russia was invited to accede to it; which proposal she ardently embraced. By concurring with their proposals, Russia had another opportunity of sending her forces into the western parts of Europe, which was all she had hoped by the subsidiary treaty with England. A settlement in the western parts of Europe was what this fierce northern power long wanted an opportunity of obtaining; for, possessed of that, she could then pour in fresh forces at any time upon the more effeminate and contending states; and, perhaps, at length, obtain universal empire. The intrigues of France were also successfully employed with Sweden. A war between that nation and Prussia was kindled up, though contrary to the inclination of their sovereign, who had the natural motives of kindred for being averse to that measure.

Thus all the alliances which England had long
been

been purchasing upon the continent, and many of the treaties which she had been long making, with all the bustle of negotiation, were at once destroyed. The forces of the contending powers therefore, now drawn out on each side, stood thus: England opposed France in America and Asia; France attacked Hanover on the continent of Europe. This country the king of Prussia undertook to protect, while England promised to furnish him with troops and money to assist his operations. On the other hand, Austria had designs upon Prussia, and drew the elector of Saxony into the same pursuits; she was also seconded in her views by Russia, Sweden, and France, while the rest of the powers of Europe continued spectators of the contention.

These designs of Austria, for the recovery of her lost dominions, were too apparent not to be early discovered by so vigilant a monarch as that of Prussia; he saw that preparations were making against him by that power in Bohemia and Moravia, while the elector of Saxony, under the pretence of a military parade, drew together about sixteen thousand men, which occupied the strong fortress of Pirna. The secret treaty also between the courts of Russia and Austria did not escape his penetration; by this it was privately stipulated, that the treating powers should, in case of apprehending any breach of the present peace, unite against Prussia, and share the dominions of that crown between them. This he considered as an offensive alliance; the treating powers alledged, that it was only defensive. As preparations for war, however, were carrying on with the utmost diligence on either side; the king of Prussia, in order to be confirmed in what he already suspected,

ordered

ordered his minister at Vienna to demand a clear explication, and proper assurances concerning the preparations he saw making. He at first received an equivocal answer; but, ordering his minister to demand a categorical reply, whether the empress queen was for peace or war, and to require a positive assurance, that she had no intention to attack him that year, or the next; an ambiguous answer was returned to so plain a question, which undoubtedly manifested an inclination for war. He therefore thought proper no longer to suspend his operations, but to carry the war into the enemies country, rather than to wait for it in his own. He entered with a large army into Saxony; and, in the usual strain of civility, demanded from the elector a passage through that country, which he well knew the possessor of it was not able to refuse. In the mean time, he disguised all his suspicions of the elector's having secretly treated with his enemies; and, upon the latter's proposing to observe a strict neutrality, he professed himself extremely pleased at the offer; but desired, as a proof of the sincerity of the elector's intentions, to separate the army of the electorate, for which there could possibly be no occasion in case of the neutrality proposed. This, however, the elector of Saxony thought prudent to refuse, which was probably what the other eagerly desired; for, in consequence of his refusal, the king formed a kind of blockade about the Saxon camp, in order to reduce it by famine; for such was the situation of this spot, on which the Saxons had encamped, that though a small army could defend it against the most numerous forces, yet the same difficulty attended leaving it, that served to render it inaccessible to an enemy. Of this his Prussian majesty took

took the advantage, and by blocking up every place of escape, cut off their provisions, and the whole body was obliged to surrender prisoners of war.

In a detail of the transactions of England, it will not be necessary to recapitulate the numerous marches, victories, sieges, and repulses of this great foreign ally. Whatever either former history had shown, or even romance might feign, was outdone both by his expedition and intrepidity. King only of a very small territory, assisted by England, whose situation was too remote to give any considerable succours, opposed and surrounded by all the most formidable powers of Europe, he still opposed them on every side; he invades Bohemia, defeats the Austrian general at Lowoschitz, retreats, begins his second campaign with another victory near Prague, is upon the point of taking that city, but by a temerity inspired by former successes, attacking the Austrians, at a disadvantage near Kolin, he is defeated, and obliged to raise the siege. *Fortune, says he, has turned her back upon me this day. I ought to have expected it; she is a female, and I am no gallant; success often occasions a destructive confidence; but another time we will do better.*

One misfortune seemed to follow another; the Hanoverians, who had joined with him and England, in the alliance, had armed in his favour, commanded by the duke of Cumberland. As this army, which consisted of three thousand eight hundred men, was greatly out-numbered by the French, they were obliged continually to retire before them. The passage of the river Weser might have been disputed with some hopes of success; yet the Hanoverians permitted them to pass.

it unmolested. Their army, therefore, was now driven from one part of the country to another, till, at length, it made a stand near a village called Hastenback, where it was judged it would be best able to sustain the superiority of the enemies numbers. However, notwithstanding all the efforts of discipline, and the advantages of situation, the weaker side was still obliged to retire; and, leaving the field of battle to the French, retreated towards Stade. By taking this route, they marched into a country, from whence they could neither procure provisions, nor yet had an opportunity of attacking the enemy upon equal terms. Unable, by their situation, to retire; or, by their strength, to advance; they were compelled to sign a capitulation, by which the whole army laid down their arms, and were dispersed into different quarters of cantonment. By this remarkable treaty, which went by the name of the treaty of Closter Seven, the Hanoverians were quite subdued, and all the French forces let loose upon the king of Prussia together.

The situation of this monarch was now become desperate; nor could human prudence foresee how he could extricate himself from his distress. The French forces, now united, invaded his dominions on one side; the Russians, who, for some time, had hovered over his dominions in another part, all at once hastened onward to overwhelm him, marking their way with slaughter and cruelty; a large body of Austrians entered Silesia, and penetrated as far as Breslau, and turning to Schweidnitz, sat down before that important fortress, which, after a long siege, surrendered. Another army of the same nation entered Lusatia, made themselves masters of Zittau, and pressing forward, laid the capital

capital of Berlin under contribution. Twenty-two thousand Swedes pierced into Prussian Pomerania, took the towns of Anclam and Demmein, and exacted tribute from the whole country. It was in vain that the king of Prussia faced about to every invader, though his enemies fled before him, while he pursued one body, another penetrated his territories in the mean time; and his dominions, even in the midst of victory, were every day contracting. The greatest part were either taken or laid under contribution, and possessed by his enemies; and he was left without any alliance or assistance, but what the British parliament might think proper to afford.

These succours could, at best, have been, for some time, but ineffectual; however, it was resolved by the English ministry, that something should be done, and accordingly an enterprize was planned against the French coast, which, by drawing off their attention from Prussia, might give it time to respire, and call off a part of the French to defend themselves. Beside this intention, England also hoped to be able to give a blow to their marine, by destroying such ships as were laid up, or building in the harbour of Rochfort, the city against which this expedition was destined. The English ministry kept this object of their operations a profound secret; and France was filled with alarms, till, at length, it was found that the fleet appeared before Rochfort, where it spent some time in deliberating upon what manner to proceed. At last it was resolved to secure the little island of Aix, an easy conquest, which, while performing, the militia of the country had time to assemble, and there was an appearance of two camps upon

the shore. The commanders, therefore, who, by the badness of the weather, were, at first, prevented from landing, now feared equal danger from the numbers of the enemy which were to oppose them. They took into consideration the badness of the coast, the danger of landing, the time the city had to prepare for a vigorous defence, and their own unfitness for any other methods to reduce it but that of a sudden attack. This consideration induced them to desist from further operations; and they unanimously resolved to return home, without making any attempt. Nothing could equal the discontent of the English upon seeing this expedition, of which they had been received such expectations, return unsuccessful. It produced, as usual, a contest between those who planned, and those who were sent to execute it. The military men represented it as useless and rash; the ministers exclaimed at the timidity and delays of those from whose vigour success was to be expected. A court of enquiry censured the commander; but a court-martial acquitted him. This, like almost all the former operations, served to embitter party, and increase despondence. A great man was even heard to say, upon a very solemn occasion, that he believed the commanders of every military operation were resolved upon doing nothing. The tumult of the people was now sunk from turbulent clamour into sullen discontent; they saw only gloomy prospects on every side, their armies destroyed, their fleets inactive, their expeditions ridiculous, and the only ally they had left in Europe, that would fight their battles, upon the point of being overwhelmed by superiority of numbers. Such were the beginnings of this war.

from which the timid foreboded national servitude, and a total destruction of all maritime power, and even the most sanguine only hoped for a peace that might restore them to former equality.

They took into consideration the danger of landing the enemy on the coast, the danger of landing the enemy on the coast, the danger of landing the enemy on the coast, and their own methods to reduce it but that of a sudden attack. This con-

SUCH was the ill success of the English arms, and of their allies, at the beginning of this war. Every day the press teemed with productions which either reproached their cowardice, or foreboded their undoing. Yet still the hopes of the parliament rose with their disappointments, and every resource seemed to augment with their expenses. Tho' the supplies for this destructive and hitherto shameful war, were enormous, yet they were raised as soon as granted. The officers of the army seemed roused into vigour by national reproach. Asia was the country in which success first began to dawn upon the British interests, and where we first learned the art of again conquering the enemy. A war in Europe could not be proclaimed between the two great powers, without being felt in the remotest parts of the globe. This immense tract of country, which was the theatre of an Asiatic war, comprehends the whole peninsula of India Proper. On the coasts of this great territory, the English, the French, and several other powers of Europe, had built forts, with the original consent of the Mogul, who claims the sovereignty of the whole empire. Whatever his right may be to this dominion, his power is scarce felt or acknowledged in many of the remoter provinces; and even the governors or nabobs, who

were originally of his appointment, have rendered themselves independent, and exert an absolute dominion over their respective territories, without acknowledging his superiority, either by tribute or homage. In their contests, therefore, these princes, instead of having recourse to the Mogul for redress, apply to the European powers, whom they can either purchase or persuade to assist them. The war between England and France, in these remote parts, first began by each power's siding with two contending nabobs, and thus, by degrees, becoming principals in the dispute. The success, on each side, for some time after the treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle, seemed doubtful, till, at length, the affairs of the English seemed to gain the ascendancy by the courage and conduct of Mr. Clive, a gentleman who first entered into the service of the company as a clerk, but soon shewed his talents more adapted for war. By his vigilance and courage the province of Arcot was cleared of the enemy, the French general taken prisoner, and the nabob, whom the English supported, reinstated in the government of which he had been formerly deprived. The French, discouraged by these misfortunes, and sensible of their own inferiority in this part of the world, sent over a commissary with a view to restore peace; and a convention between the two companies was accordingly concluded, importing, that the territories taken on either side since the last peace should be mutually restored; that the nabobs advanced by the influence of either party, should be acknowledged by both; and that, for the future, neither should interfere in the differences between the princes of the country. This cessation, however, was not of long duration; compacts made between trading companies can
never

never be of long continuance, when there is a prospect of advantage to either side from their infraction. In a few months after both sides renewed their operations, no longer as auxiliaries, but as rivals in arms and commerce. What the motives to this infraction were are not sufficiently known; wherever there is trade there must be a degree of avarice; and that is a passion too often the parent of injustice and cruelty. Certain it is that the viceroy of Bengal, from motives of personal resentment, declared against the English; and, levying a numerous army, laid siege to Calcutta, one of their forts, which was in no situation to endure the attack even of barbarians. It was taken by assault; and the garrison, to the number of one hundred and forty-six persons, were crowded into a narrow prison called the *Black Hole*, about eighteen feet square, without any entrance for air, except by two iron windows to the west, which, by no means, afforded a sufficient quantity for the supporting life in such numbers. In such a burning climate it is terrible to conceive the situation of wretches thus immured and suffocating each other. Their first effort, upon finding the danger of their horrid confinement, was to break open the door; but this being impossible, they endeavoured to excite the compassion or the avidity of the guard, by offering him a large sum of money for his assistance, in removing them to separate prisons, with which he was not able to comply, as the viceroy was asleep, and no person durst disturb him. They were now therefore left without hopes of relief to perish, and the whole prison was filled with groans, shrieks, contest and confusion. This turbulence soon after sunk into languor and despair; and towards morning all was

horrid silence and desolation. Of an hundred and forty-six who had entered alive, twenty-three only survived, and of these several died by putrid fevers upon their being set free.

The reduction of this important fortress served to interrupt the prosperous successes of the English company; but the fortune of Mr. Clive still man-quilled every obstacle; a fleet, under the command of admiral Watson, conspired with his efforts, and helped him in his victories. Angria, a piratical prince, who had long annoyed the company's settlements in the neighbourhood of Bombay, first felt the weight of our naval power. This prince maintained a large number of galleys, with which he would attack the largest ships, when he found a proper opportunity; and, by this means, he exacted a tribute from every European power for a permission to trade. To subdue such a dangerous enemy to commerce, admiral Watson and colonel Clive sailed into his harbour of Geriah, though they sustained a warm fire as they passed, and soon threw all his fleet and his fort into flames. The next day the fort surrendered at discretion, where the conquerors found a large quantity of warlike stores, and effects to the value of one hundred and thirty thousand pounds.

From this conquest Mr. Clive went on to take revenge for the treatment of the English at Calcutta, and about the beginning of December arrived at Balasore, in the kingdom of Bengal. There was but small opposition made to the fleet, or the army, till they came before Calcutta, the scene of former cruelty; but as soon as the admiral, with two ships, arrived before the town, he received a furious fire from all the batteries. This, however, he returned with still greater execution, and,

and, in less than two hours, the place was abandoned. Thus by the conquest of this and the former fortress, the English became possessed of the two strongest settlements on the banks of the Ganges. Soon after these successes, Hugly, a city of great trade, was reduced with as little difficulty, and all the viceroy of Bengal's storehouses and granaries destroyed. This barbarous prince, incensed at these losses, assembled an army of ten thousand horse, and fifteen thousand foot, fully resolved to expel the English out of his dominions. Upon the first intelligence of his march, colonial Clive begged of the admiral a reinforcement of men from the ships; and six hundred sea-men were accordingly soon added to his little army. The numerous forces of the viceroy of Bengal appeared, and colonel Clive advanced in three columns to attack him. But, though the forces were so seemingly disproportioned, with respect to number, the victory soon declared in favour of the English commander. In fact, what could timid Asiatic soldiers do against European troops, hardened by war, and inured to all the vicissitudes of climate. All the customs, habits, and opinions of the Asiatics tend to enfeeble the body, and effeminate the mind. When we conceive a body of men led up to the attack, dressed in long silk garments, with no other courage but that inspired by opium; with no other fears from defeat but that of changing their mode of slavery; their chief commander mounted on an elephant, and consequently a more conspicuous object for aim; their artillery drawn by oxen, impatient and furious upon the slightest wound; every soldier utterly unacquainted with that cool intrepidity which provides against danger, and only taught to fight by the same arts that raise

their passions. If we consider all these circumstances, it will be no way surprizing if one or two thousand Europeans should easily discomfit thirty thousand Indians. And all the heroism of a Cyrus, or an Alexander, in gaining such disproportioned victories, will no longer be the subject of admiration.

A victory so easily acquired by a foreign enemy, soon rendered the viceroy of Bengal contemptible to his subjects at home. His present cowardice rendered him despicable; his former insolence and cruelty odious. A conspiracy was projected against him by Alikan, his prime minister, and the English having private intimations of the design, resolved to seize the opportunity of seconding it with all their endeavours. Accordingly colonel Clive marched forward, took the town of Cutwa in his march, and soon came up with the viceroy's army; and, after a short contest, put the whole to flight, with terrible slaughter. Alikan, who had first incited his master to this undertaking, had hitherto concealed his attachments, either through fear or perfidy; but, after this victory, he openly espoused the cause of the English, and was therefore solemnly proclaimed viceroy of Bengal, Bahar, and Orisa, in the room of the former viceroy, who was as solemnly deposed, and soon after put to death by his successor. The new viceroy was not insensible of the gratitude he owed the English, for their assistance in his promotion. He granted liberally all their demands, satisfied them even to the most extended wish of avarice, and took every method to demonstrate his pride in their alliance.

Yet not the Indians alone, but the French also, submitted to colonel Clive's assiduity and courage, seconded by the endeavours of the admirals Wat-
son

son and Pocock. Chadenagore, a French settlement higher up the river than Calcutta, of great strength, and the most important of any possessed by that nation in the bay of Bengal, submitted to the English arms. The goods and money found in the place were considerable; but the chief damage the French sustained was, in the ruin of their head settlement on the Ganges, by which they had long divided the commerce of this part of India. Thus, in one campaign, the English, in some measure, became possessors of an immense tract of country, superior in wealth, fertility, extent, and number of inhabitants, to many of Europe. Above two millions sterling were paid to the company and sufferers at Calcutta; the soldiers and seamen shared six hundred thousand pounds, and the English forces became too formidable for resistance. Yet, perhaps, this remote power will, one day, either serve to drain from the mother-country all its useful hands, or our victories will serve to teach the native barbarians to avail themselves of their numbers, and, by being frequently defeated, they will, at last, learn to conquer.

The success of the English was not a little alarming to the French ministry at home; and it is believed that even the Dutch themselves entertained some jealousy of their growing greatness. A considerable reinforcement was therefore sent from France, under the command of general Lally, an Irishman, who was reckoned one of the bravest, yet most whimsical men in the French service. He had been, from his earliest years, bred a soldier of fortune, and carried the military spirit of honour to its utmost limits. Under his guidance the French affairs seemed, for some time, to wear a better face; he took fort St. David's, plundered a

town belonging to the king of Tanjour, in alliance with the English, and after laid siege to his capital. Failing in his design upon this city, he entered the province of Arcot, and prepared for laying siege to Madras, the chief settlement of our company upon the coast of Coromandel. In the siege of this important fortress, a greater variety of difficulties presented than he had expected. The artillery of the garrison was well managed; while, on the other side, the French acted with the utmost timidity; it was in vain that their commander exhorted them to proceed, though a breach was made, and lay open for fifteen days, no one of them dared to venture to the assault. Besides this, they were ill supplied with provisions; and the arrival of a reinforcement in the garrison soon after, served to banish all hopes of success. After a brisk fire they raised the siege; and this miscarriage so intirely depressed the ardour of the enemy, that they appeared quite dispirited in almost every ensuing engagement. In this manner, therefore, their affairs went on declining, not less by land than by sea. There were several engagements between the two fleets, in which the French, though superior in number of ships and men, always declined a decisive engagement.

But the French were not the only enemies the English had to fear in this part of the world; the jealousy of the Dutch was excited by our repeated success, and the late extension of our power. As this dispute, however trifling it may seem, may, one day, be of greater consequence than it appears at present, I shall be more particular in my relation of it.

Under a pretence of reinforcing their garrisons in Bengal, the Dutch equipped an armament of seven

seven ships, which was ordered to sail up the Ganges, and render their fort, at a place called Chincura, so formidable, as to be able to bid defiance to the power of Britain, and thus secure to themselves the trade for salt-petre, which this place afforded us. This design, however, colonel Clive thought incumbent on him, if possible, to defeat; and sending the Dutch commander a letter, he informed him that he could not permit his landing, and marching forces to Chincura. To this message the Dutchman replied, that he had no such designs as were imputed to him; and he only requested liberty to land his troops to refresh them, which was readily granted. He made these concessions, however, only till he knew that the ships which were to second his operations, were come up the river, and then throwing off the mask, he began his march to Chincura, and took several small vessels belonging to the English, to retaliate for the affront he pretended to have sustained in being denied permission to proceed. Whether, upon this occasion, the Calcutta Indiaman was sent out to interrupt their progress, or was only pursuing its way homeward, is not clearly known; but certain it is, that the Dutch commander threatened to sink it, if it presumed to pass him. The English captain seeing them point their guns, as if they really resolved to put their threats in execution, returned to Calcutta, where two other India ships lay at anchor, and reported his adventure to colonel Clive, who instantly ordered the three Indiamen to prepare for battle. The Dutch fleet were not remiss in advancing to meet them. After a few broadsides, however, the Dutch commodore struck, and the rest of his fleet followed the example. The victory being thus obtained without

without any loss to the English, captain Willson, who commanded in the expedition, took possession of the prizes, which had greatly suffered, and the crews were sent prisoners to the English fort. In the mean time their land-forces, which amounted to eleven hundred men, were totally defeated by colonel Ford, sent upon that duty by Clive. A considerable part were killed, and the rest made prisoners of war. During this contest, the nabob preserved a suspicious neutrality, ready, as it should seem, to join with the conquerors. Fortune, however, no sooner determined in favour of the English, than he offered them his services, and professed himself ready to demolish the Dutch fortification of Chincura. This contest was represented in very different lights to the respective governments at home; the Dutch declaimed against the English, oppressing all who attempted to trade in the Indies; while the English, on the other hand, reminded the Dutch of their former cruelties, and of their desire of gain, even at the expence of every moral obligation. However, soon after, a negotiation ensued; the Dutch wisely gave way to a power they were unable to withstand. A treaty was concluded, and peace was restored, seemingly to the satisfaction of both parties. Such is the present situation of this contest, which, probably, contains the seeds of future dissension. The Dutch will, upon all occasions, think it allowable to increase their power in India to whatever pitch they think proper; and the English will ever find it their interest to repel them. It may thus happen, that the amity of the two powers in Europe will not be sufficient to preserve unanimity in so distant a part of the world. In this manner, while Great Britain puts an end to one war,

war,

war, she often lays the foundation for another; for, extended empire ever produces an increasing necessity of defence.

Our success against the French on the coast of Coromandel was not less conspicuous; our troops were headed by colonel Coote, a native of Ireland, a man of prudence and bravery; he marched against general Bally, took the city of Wandewash in his way, reduced Carangoly, a fortress commanded by colonel O Kennedy; and, at length, came up with the French general, who was equally desirous of the engagement. It is remarkable enough, that the commanders, on either side, were countrymen; but this did not, in the least, abate their attachment to the different crowns they served. In the morning early the French advanced within three quarters of a mile of the English line, and the cannonading began with great fury on both sides; the engagement continued with much obstinacy till about two in the afternoon, when the French gave way, and fled towards their camp; which, however, they as quickly abandoned, and left their cannon, and the field of battle to the conquerors. Their losing the city of Arcot was the consequence of this victory; and nothing now remained to them of all their vast possessions in India but Pondicherry, their strongest, largest, and most beautiful settlement. This capital of the French Indian power, in the days of its prosperity, exceeded all other European settlements there, in trade, opulence, and splendor; and was still the repository of all the French wealth, which remained after repeated defeats. As soon as the fortresses adjacent to this important place were reduced, colonel Coote sat down before it, resolved upon the blockade by land, while admiral Stevens shut up their

their harbour by sea. A regular siege was, at that time, impracticable, from the periodical rains which in that climate were soon expected to obstruct such operations. These disadvantages were even sufficient to repress any attempts whatsoever; but, notwithstanding the inclemency of the climate, the English commander continued before the place for full seven months. Neither rains nor storms were, in the least, able to abate their assiduity; they continued the siege, and pressed the garrison in such a manner that they were reduced to the most extreme distress. Lally, however, was resolutely bent on suffering every calamity rather than yield this last stake of French power in India, though his soldiers were obliged to feed on dogs and cats, and even bought such wretched provisions extremely dear, (eight crowns having been given for the flesh of a dog) yet still he determined to hold out. In the midst of this distress, fortune seemed to give an opportunity of relief, had it been properly seconded. In the beginning of January, one of those terrible storms which are common in those climates, but of whose violence we can have but little idea in Europe, wrecked a large part of the English fleet that was blocking up the harbour of Pondicherry. This was a blow which once more elevated the hopes of the despairing garrison. The governor now flattered himself with the hope of being supplied with provisions; and once more animated his soldiers, long sunk by disease, famine, fatigue, and uninterrupted adversity. He immediately wrote to one of the French residents at a Dutch settlement for instant assistance; his eager impatience appears in the letter he sent. *The English Squadron is no more, Sir. Of the twelve ships they had in our road, seven are lost, crews.*

crews and all the other four dismayed, and do more
 than one frigate hath escaped to sea, not an instant in
 sending boats after boats loaded with rice. The sav-
 ing of Pondicherry hath been in your power ever all
 ready: this opportunity neglected, the fault will be
 all yours. Offer great sums, give some days and
 sell seventeen thousand Moraccoes, in short, try not
 all attempt all, force ally and find some good price
 should it be but half a penny for a shill. ni Bro-
 singular letter, however, was intercepted, and
 in less than four days, he had the mortification to
 behold admiral Stevens again appearing in the
 harbour, who had repaired his losses with all pos-
 sible celerity, and the blockade now became all
 complete as ever. Still, however, he made no
 proposal to surrender, while the siege was carried
 on by his countryman with redoubled alacrity, and
 at length, he found his troops half consumed
 with fatigue and famine, a breach made in the
 rampart, and not more than one day's provision of
 any kind remaining. He was now reduced to an
 extremity that would admit of no hesitation, a
 signal was therefore made to cease hostilities, the
 principal of the jesuits, together with two civi-
 lians, came out, and offered terms of capitulation.
 Lally, however, could not be prevailed upon to
 offer any terms; he sent a paper, filled with re-
 proaches, against the English, to colonel Coote,
 and alledged, that he would not treat with an ene-
 my upon the honourable terms of war, who had
 already forfeited his honour in several instances.
 He therefore suffered the English troops to take
 possession of the place, but refused to surrender it
 in the usual forms. This conquest terminated the
 power of France in India: the whole trade of that

vast

vast peninsula, from the Indus to the Ganges, became our own. The princes of the country knew the English force, and learned to fear it. Since that time nothing considerable has been done against us. Our East-India company have become the arbiters of empire. The Mogul himself has been defeated, and taken prisoner. The British empire begins to vie even with that of ancient Rome; the extent of its dominions on land is as wide, and its force at sea is infinitely greater. Happy if we know when to bound our successes; happy if we can distinguish between victories and advantages; if we can be convinced that when a nation shines brightest with conquest, it may then, like a wasting taper, be only hastening to decay.

LETTER LXVI.

VICTORY, which thus first dawned upon us, from the east, seemed to extend even to Europe and America. But some steps led to these successes which had been long wished for; and, at length, were effected. The affairs of war were directed by a ministry, which seemed utterly unequal to the weight and importance of such a charge; they were but feebly held together among each other, and clamoured against by the united voice of the people. It had long been their method to rule by party; and, surrounding the throne, it was said, they attempted only to fill the royal ear with whatever suggestions they thought most to their interests. When any new measure was proposed, which could not receive their approbation; or any new member was introduced into government, whom they did not nominate, it was their method to throw up their places with a secret view of resuming them with greater lustre. Thus all hope of preferment was to be expected only from them; public favours were conferred only for private services; they were thought to govern in the senate and in the field; the strength of the crown was actually declining; that of the people was scarce any more, while aristocracy filled up every avenue to the throne with pride, ignorance, and faction.

The state of the king and nation, at that time, was truly deplorable; the defeat of Braddock in America; the loss of Oswego; the delay of armaments; the absurd destination of fleets and armies,

all

all served to reduce the people almost to a state of desperation, and brought addresses to the King from every part of the kingdom. The general voice was, at length, too loud not to reach the throne; and the ministry were, at length, obliged to admit some men into a share of the government, whose talents and integrity might, in some measure, counterbalance their own deficiency. At the head of these newly introduced were Mr. Pitt and Mr. Legge; the former of these was appointed secretary of state, the other chancellor of the exchequer. To draw the characters of men still living, would necessarily subject me to the imputation of adulation or satire; it is enough to say, that the people had high expectations from their abilities; and, in the end, they were not disappointed.

The pleasure of the nation, however, was but of short continuance; a ministry composed of such jarring principles could not long continue united, being constituted of persons espousing different measures, and actuated by different motives. The old junto courted the sovereign's favour by their pretended attachment to his foreign dominions; the new clamoured against all continental connexions, as utterly incompatible with the interest of the nation. Both, perhaps, might have been wrong; but it is obvious that these sentiments were sufficient to sink the latter in the royal esteem; and this dislike was artfully kept up, and increased by their old rivals in power.

A.D. 1758. A few months, therefore, after Mr. Pitt had been put into office, he was obliged to resign the seals, by his majesty's command; and Mr. Legge was dismissed from being chancellor of the exchequer. The old ministry now thought themselves secure in the unmolested possession of former

former power; but this very step which they took for their own security turned out to them as unfortunate as those they planned for the public were unsuccessful. The whole nation seemed to rise up as one man in vindication of that part of the ministry that was lately excluded. And the king, at length, thought proper to comply with the general solicitation. Mr. Pitt and Mr. Legge were again restored, and a train of successes soon began to dignify their designs. For some time, however, the measures planned by the former ministry were pursued in America; and though the English were superior to the enemy, yet still they felt all the inconvenience of irresolute councils and ill-planned operations. Our women and children in that part of the world were exposed to the unparalleled cruelty of the Indian savages; and, what is still more remarkable, two thousand Britons, with arms in their hands, continued tame spectators of these inhumanities. Bad success even produces complaint on all sides; and England now heard nothing but invective and accusation. The generals sent over to manage the operations of war, loudly accused the timidity and the slowness of the natives, who were to unite in their own defence; the natives, on the contrary, as warmly expostulated against the pride, avarice, or incapacity of those sent over to command them. General Shirley, who was appointed to that command, had been superseded by Lord Loudon; and this nobleman soon after returning to England, three several commanders were put at the head of separate operations; the most important being that designed against Cape Breton, was commanded by general Amherst. The taking possession of this island, and its forts, was a conquest greatly wished

wished by all our colonies, as it had always been a convenient harbour to the enemy, which from thence annoyed our trade with impunity. It was also a convenient situation for carrying on their fishery; a branch of commerce of the utmost benefit to the French nation. The fortress of Louisburg was strengthened with all the assistance of art; the garrison was numerous; the commander vigilant; and every precaution taken to prevent a descent. An account of the operations of a siege is tedious; be it sufficient to say, that the English surmounted every obstacle with the most amazing intrepidity; their former timidity seemed now converted into persevering resolution; the place was surrendered by capitulation; and our troops, long used to disappointment and repulse, began to boast of victory in their turn.

Two other operations were carried on in America at the same time, the one under General Abercrombie, against Crown Point and Ticonderago; the other, more to the southward, against fort Du Quesne; the latter expedition was successful; but that against Crown Point and Ticonderago was attended with the customary bad fortune. This was now the second time that the English army had attempted to penetrate into those hideous wilds by which nature had secured the French encroachments in that remote part of America; Braddock fell in the attempt; his rashness contributed to his defeat; and too much caution, perhaps, was the fault of his successor. Much time was spent in marching to the place of action; and the enemy were thus perfectly prepared to give the English troops a warm reception. They were found intrenched under the fort of Ticonderago, behind a breast-work raised eight feet high, and still farther secured by felled trees, with their branches pointing outwards. These difficulties,

ties, however, the English attempted to surmount; but as the enemy being secure themselves, took aim at leisure, a terrible carnage of the assailants ensued, and the general, after repeated efforts, was obliged to order a retreat. The English army, however, was still superior to that of the enemy, and might, it was supposed, have gone onward with success, if supported by their artillery, which had not yet arrived; but the General felt, too sensibly, the terrors of the late defeat, to remain in the vicinity of a victorious enemy; he therefore reembarked his troops, and returned to his camp at Lake George, from whence he had taken his departure.

The success of this campaign, however, was, upon the whole, greatly in favour of the English. The taking of fort Du Quesne served to remove from our colonies the terror of the incursions of the barbarians, and interrupted that continued correspondence, which, by a chain of forts, one part of the French settlements had with the other. The ministry too discovered a spirit of vigorous resolution hitherto unknown, in this part of the world; and the next campaign promised more brilliant successes.

Accordingly, in the opening of the next session, the ministry seemed sensible that a single effort carried in such wide extent 4. D. 1759. would never bring the enemy into subjection; it was therefore resolved to attack them in several different parts of this extensive empire at once. It was therefore proposed to attack the French in all their places of strength at the same time. Preparations were accordingly made, and expeditions went forward against three different parts of the northern continent of America. General Amherst, commander in chief, with a body of twelve

twelve thousand men, was to attack Crown Point, that had hitherto been the rendezvous of the English army. General Wolfe was, at the opposite quarter, to enter the river St. Lawrence, and undertake the siege of Quebec, the capital of the French dominions in this part of the world, while General Pridaux and Sir William Johnson were to attempt a fort near the cataract of Niagara. This last expedition was the first that was successful. The fort of Niagara was a place of great importance, and served to command all the communication between the northern and western French settlements. The siege was soon commenced by the English, but General Pridaux was killed in the trenches by the bursting of a cohorn; so that the whole success of the expedition fell to General Johnson, and his good fortune. He omitted nothing to promote the vigorous measures of his predecessor, but added all his own popularity. The French knew the importance of this fort, and attempted to relieve it. Johnson attacked them with his usual intrepidity and success; in less than an hour their whole army was put to the route, and the garrison, beholding the defeat of their countrymen, surrendered prisoners of war. Nor was General Amherst less successful, though, without meeting an enemy, in his march to Crown Point, he found both that fort and Ticonderago deserted and destroyed. There now, therefore, remained but one grand and decisive blow to put all North America in possession of the English. This was the taking of Quebec, a city handsomely built, populous, and flourishing. Admiral Saunders commanded the naval part of the expedition; that by land was committed to the conduct of General Wolfe. This young soldier, who was not yet thirty-five, had distinguished himself on many former occasions, particularly in the siege of Louisburg, a part of the

success

success of which was justly ascribed to him, who, without being indebted to family or connections, had raised himself to great glory by his present command. The war in this part of the world had hitherto been carried on with extreme barbarity. Wolfe, however, disdained those base proceedings, and carried on all the terrors of war with the humanity of a truly civilized European. A description of the siege of this city may instruct a soldier, but can scarcely inform a citizen; both foolishness to observe, that its beginning appeared extremely unpromising to the besiegers; and repeated repulses even served to abate the hopes of the commander. *I know,* said he, *that the affairs of Great Britain require the most vigorous measures; but then the courage of a handful of brave men should be exerted only where there is some hope of a favourable event. At present the difficulties are so various that I am at a loss how to determine.* However, he resolved, though now sinking under fatigue and sickness, to make one vigorous attempt before he gave up all; and accordingly, in the night part of his troops with great difficulty made themselves masters of an hill that commanded the town. A battle ensued; Montcalm, the French commander, resolved not to survive the defeat of his country. Wolfe, on the other side, resolved to conquer or die. Both commanders had their wish; both fell; but the English were victorious. The circumstances attending the death of Wolfe served to give an example like that of the noble Theban. He, in the beginning of the engagement, received a wound in the hand, which he dissembled, wrapping it round with his handkerchief, to stop the effusion of blood; he advanced with unconcern; a second ball was more fatal; it pierced his breast, so that, unable to proceed, he leaned on the shoulder of a soldier who was near him. Now,

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struggling in the agonies of death, and just departing, he heard a voice cry, *they run*; he seemed to revive a moment at the sound, and asking who ran, was informed the *French*, expressing his wonder that they ran so soon, and unable to gaze any longer, he sunk on the soldier's breast, and his last words were, *I die happy*. Perhaps the loss of such a man was greater to the nation than the conquering of all Canada was advantageous; but it is the misfortune of humanity, that we can never know true greatness till that moment when we are going to lose it.

The surrender of the city was the consequence of this victory, and, with it, the total cession of all Canada. The French, it is true, made, in the ensuing season, a vigorous effort to retake it; but, by the good conduct of our Governor, the town held out till relieved by an English fleet, under the command of Lord Colville. Thus did this campaign make ample reparation for all the losses that had been hitherto sustained by the English. The French had now no force capable of making any resistance; they held out the war now, not with hopes of victory, but honourable capitulation; one place after another was invaded; Montreal, at last, surrendered; and, in a short time, a country which their own writers have represented, as being more extensive than the Roman Empire, fell totally under the power of his Britannic Majesty.

How far the extending dominion tends to the increasing the strength of a nation, is an object worthy consideration. The splendour of victory should never dazzle the eye of reason. No people ever could call their country powerful, if it were not populous. For political force depends upon the small frontier to be defended; and the vicinity of an army to every place to be invaded; but extended empire takes away

away both these advantages, and, before the soldier can traverse half his proper territories, his country may have already felt all the horrors of invasion. Whatever joy therefore our country might have felt at these immense acquisitions of remote territory, I own it gives me no very pleasing prospect. The manufactures, the trade, and the riches of these distant countries, can never recompence for the continual drain of useful and industrious subjects, that must be derived from the mother country to people them. Wherever the lower sort of people in any kingdom can fly from labour; they will be ready to go; yet, upon the industry, and the valour of these alone, every kingdom must hope for security. Not the effeminate, and the luxurious, can defend their country in the day of battle; they may increase timidity by their example, but opulence can never give true relief. The Spaniards and the Portuguese were much more powerful before they divided their strength into all the torrid climates of Southern America. The state thus got riches, but lost men; they had gold, but could not regain industry. Thus are their nations now incapable of defending themselves against powerful foreign invasion. The immense wealth of the Indies that every year comes home to their ports goes to enrich a few; their subjects are either in the extremes of wealth or poverty; the rich have only slaves beneath them, who hate those for whom they must labour; the poor have no acquisitions nor property, to defend; so that their armies are composed either of wretches pressed into the service, who only seek for opportunities not to fight, but to fly; or of men, rich and noble, courageous from pride, yet weak from luxury. Such is not, as yet, the case of England, nor will ever be,

if a passion for conquest is not mistaken for national prosperity.

LETTER LXVII.

THE success of our arms in America was achieved by moderate efforts; on the contrary, in Europe the efforts we made, and the operations of our great ally the King of Prussia were astonishing, yet produced no very signal effects. Safety was all that could be expected; and this was secured contrary to all human expectation. You have just seen that Monarch surrounded by enemies; the greatest and most formidable powers of Europe; you have seen almost the whole power of the continent united against, and hovering over, his devoted dominions; and the only allies that remained to him bound by treaty to retire, and give him no assistance. In this terrible situation he still adhered to his fortitude, and relying on his natural subjects alone, resolved never to abandon his claims. Such was the desperate condition of his affairs; yet they were still rendered more hopeless, when he was informed that his only friend, the Monarch of that generous people which had hitherto supplied him with money and stores, was going to forsake him, and leave him to irremediable ruin. It was thus he expostulated with the doubting Monarch upon this occasion: *Is it possible that your Majesty can have so little fortitude and constancy, as to be disappointed by a small reverse of fortune? Are our affairs so ruinous that they cannot be repaired? Consider the step you have made me undertake, and remember you are the cause of all my misfortunes. I should never have abandoned my former alliances but for your flattering assurances. I do not now repent of the treaty concluded between us; but I in-*

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treat you will not ingloriously leave me at the mercy of my enemies, after having brought upon me all the powers of Europe. The French and Imperialists, after a successful summer campaign, were, at this time, which was the depth of winter, set down to the siege of Leipzig. His Prussian Majesty dreaded the capture of this important city, and soon, unexpectedly, seemed to rise up before it. Such was the terror of his arms, even vanquished as he had been, that his approach raised the siege, and the French, though superior in number, retreated. He at length overtook them at a village called Rosbach, and gained a complete victory, that night alone saved their whole army from destruction. The Austrians were, in another part of the Empire, still victorious, and had taken the Prince of Bevern, his generalissimo, prisoner. The King, after a dreadful march of two hundred miles, in the depth of winter, came up with them near Breslau, disposed his inferior forces with his usual judgment, and obtained another bloody victory, in which he took not less than fifteen thousand prisoners. Breslau, with a garrison of ten thousand men, surrendered soon after. These successes dispirited the enemy, and raised his allies to new hopes.

After the capitulation of Closter-Severn was signed, between the Duke of Cumberland and the Duke of Richelieu, both sides began to complain of infractions. The Hanoverians accused the rapacity of the French General, and the insolent brutality of his soldiers; while the French retorted the charge of insurrection against them, and began to think of treating as a conquered enemy those whom they had only bound by treaty as neutrals. Treaties have never been preserved longer than interest or compulsion bound them; political faith is a word without mean-

ing, the French oppressed the Hanoverians; the latter resumed their arms, and each side complained, as usual, of infraction. A General was not long wanting to assemble the collecting army. Prince Ferdinand of Brunswie put himself at their head, began by skirmishing with success; and, at last, they were in a capacity of becoming formidable to their late victors. From this time the King of Prussia fought the enemy upon more equal terms than ever, often victorious, sometimes repulsed; but ever active and formidable. To name his victories, the towns he took, the dangers he escaped, and the losses he suffered, would take up more time than I would chuse to grant to such accounts, or you should bestow. Never was the art of war carried to such a pitch as by him. In this war Europe saw, with astonishment, campaigns carried on in the midst of winter; great and bloody battles fought, yet producing no visible advantage to the victors. At no time, since the days of heroism, were such numbers destroyed, so many towns taken, so many skirmishes fought, such stratagems practised, or such intrepidity shewn. Armies now were considered as composing one single machine, directed by the General, and animated with one will. From the commentary of these campaigns, succeeding Generals will take their lessons for devastation, and improve in the arts of increasing human calamity.

England was, all this time, happily retired from the calamities which drenched the rest of Europe in blood; yet, from her natural military eagerness, she seemed desirous of sharing those dangers of which she was only a spectator. This passion for carrying on a continental war, was not less pleasing to the Monarch from his native attachments, than to the people from their natural propensity to arms. As

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soon as it was known that Prince Ferdinand had put himself at the head of the Hanoverian army, his Britannic Majesty, in a speech at the opening of the session of parliament, observed that the late successes in Germany had given an happy turn to his affairs, which it would be necessary to improve. The commons therefore granted liberal supplies both for the service of the King of Prussia, and for enabling the army formed in the Electorate of Hanover, to act vigorously in conjunction with him. Soon after it was considered, that men would be a more grateful supply than money. The minister, who had first come into power and popularity, by opposing such measures, was now prevailed upon to enter into them with even greater ardour than any of his predecessors. The hopes of putting a speedy end to the war, by vigorous measures, his connexions, and, perhaps, the pleasure he found in giving his Majesty pleasure, incited him eagerly into a continental war. It is certain no minister could more powerfully second a warlike Monarch's intentions; that spirit of enterprise which had, in a measure, taken birth with his administration began to overpower all obstacles. The passion for military honour seemed diffused through all ranks of people; and it only wanted a channel in which to flow. In order to indulge this general inclination, the Duke of Marlborough was sent into Germany with a small body of British forces to assist Prince Ferdinand, where they behaved with bravery, and conspired in promoting that Prince's successes. Each victory they gained, however, only served as a pretext to call over new forces from Britain, while the English Ministry were taught to believe that every last battle would be decisive. The battle of Crevelt was fought, in which the Hanoverians and English had the advantage; but it produced no

effect. The victory of Minden followed; but laurels seemed all that England reaped from the conquered field. After these two victories, it was supposed, that one reinforcement more of British troops would terminate the war in our favour; a reinforcement was therefore sent. The British army in Germany now amounted to above thirty thousand men; yet no advantage of any consequence was the result of this formidable assistance. War was the trade of some Generals, and, it must be allowed, a gainful trade it was. Let me therefore here again pass over this continued repetition of marchings, skirmishes, and rencounters, nor load the page with names of German Generals, too difficult to be pronounced by an English tongue, and equally grating to a patriot ear. The victories of either side might, in fact, be considered as a compact by which something was to be lost on either side, and no advantage to be acquired. The English, at length, began to open their eyes to their own interest; nor could all the splendours of victory so far blind them, as not to see that they were waging unequal war, and assuming new loads of taxes for conquests they could neither preserve nor enjoy. Such were the growing discontents of the people, when the King, who had inspired these measures, unexpectedly died. On the twenty-fifth day of October, 1760, George II, without any previous disorder, was found by his domestic servants, expiring in his chamber. He had arisen at his usual hour, and observed to his attendants, that as the weather was fine, he would walk out; in a few minutes after this, being left alone, he was heard to fall down upon the floor. The noise of his fall brought his attendants into the room, who lifted him into bed, where he expired, in a faint voice, that the Princess Amelia might be sent for; but before her arrival

arrival he expired, in the 77th year of his age, and the 38th of his reign, in the midst of victory; and, at that very period, when the universal enthusiasm of conquest began to subside into more sober reflexions. If any Monarch was happy in the peculiar mode and time of his death, it was he. The factions which had been nursing in his reign, had not yet come to maturity; and all their virulence threatened to fall upon his successor. He was himself of no shining abilities; and, consequently, while he was suffered to guide his German dominions, he entrusted the care of Britain to his ministers at home. However, as we stand too near this Monarch to view his real character without partiality, take the following characters of him, by two writers of opposite sentiments.

“As to the extent of his understanding, (says one) or the splendour of his virtue, we rather wish for opportunities of praising, than undertake the task ourselves. His public character was marked with a predilection for his native country, to which he sacrificed all other motives.”

On the other hand, says his panegyrist, “On whatever side we look upon his character, we shall find ample matter for just and unsuspected praise. None of his predecessors in the throne of England lived to so great an age, or enjoyed longer felicity. His subjects were still improving under him in commerce and arts; and his own economy set a prudent example to the nation, which, however, they did not follow. He was, in his temper, sudden and violent; but this, though it influenced his behaviour, made no change in his conduct, which was generally guided by reason. He was plain and direct in his intentions, true to his word, steady in his favour

“and protection to his servants; nor parting even
 “with his ministers till compelled to it by the vio-
 “lence of faction. In short, through the whole of
 “life he appeared rather to live for the cultivation
 “of useful virtues than splendid ones; and satisfied
 “with being good, left others their unenvied great-
 “ness.”

L E T T E R LXVIII.

I Am sorry that praise bestowed on living merit is often found to injure the goodness it applauds. The character of the successor of George the second deserves the warmest panegyric; and all who love their country only wish for a continuance of that spirit, and that virtue which has hitherto appeared in him. Never did Monarch come to the throne at a more critical period; the nation, flushed with conquest, yet tired of war; expecting the lowest submission from their humbled enemies, yet murmuring under the immense load of their taxes. One part of the people acquiring immense wealth by the continuance of hostilities; another reduced almost to bankruptcy. Besides this, the throne was hedged round by ignorance and faction, men intent only on their own interests, and willing to persuade Monarchy that whatever conduced to their own wishes was directed for the welfare of the kingdom. It was in this disposition of things, that George III. came to the crown. The kingdom began to divide into two parties; or, more properly speaking, the very same individuals seemed to wear, at once, a face of joy and discontent. They felt all the triumphs of their successes, but justly dreaded the consequences of an expensive continuance of them. The numberless
 victories

victories they gained by sea continued to keep them in spirits, and induced them to supply the immense expences of the year with chearfulness. During the whole period of the war succeeding the execution of Admiral Byng, nothing could be carried on with more spirit and resolution, than all our naval engagements. In every enterprise the superior bravery, skill, and dexterity of the English were obvious. Often with forces very much disproportioned, they took their adversaries ships, and effectually disabled the enemies force by sea.

No history can furnish examples of such numerous fleets, or more active commanders. This desire for victory seemed even to diffuse itself to the lowest officers; and the captains of privateers seemed as much enamoured of conquest as with a desire of gain. The Admirals, Hawke, Howe, Boscawen, Pocock, &c. were always victorious; the Captains, Tyrrel, Foster, Gilchrist, Lockhart, and others, often fought at a disadvantage, but never without honour. As an instance of the intrepid spirit of our seamen in this war, I shall mention one action, which posterity, if it were only singly supported, might look upon as incredible. The annals of mankind cannot shew an effort of more desperate courage than was exerted under the command of captain William Death, commander of the Terrible privateer. He had, in the beginning of his cruize, made prize of a rich merchant-ship, and with this was returning home to England in triumph, when he had the misfortune to fall in with the Vengeance privateer of St. Malo, much his superior in force, he having but twenty-six guns, the enemy thirty-six, and a proportionable number of men. The Terrible's prize was soon re-taken, and converted against her; but though so unequally matched,

captain Death maintained a furious engagement that cannot be paralleled in the annals of any country. (The French commander and his second were killed; with two thirds of his crew; but much more dreadful was the slaughter on board the Terrible. When the enemy boarded it, they only found one frightful scene of slaughter, silence, and desolation. Of two hundred men only sixteen were found remaining alive, and the ship itself so shattered as scarcely to be kept above water.)

Such were the dear-bought naval victories of France; and such was the obstinacy of the English, even when defeated, that the court of Versailles, at length, seemed to demand peace at any rate. To this request the English were ready to accede; and plenipotentiaries were sent from either court to negotiate so wished for a reconciliation. France sent to London Mr. Bussy, a man rather skilled in the arts of negotiation than the open integrity becoming the minister of a great nation. England sent over, in exchange, Mr. Stanley, to Paris.

It seemed to be a fundamental principle in this treaty, which, however, proved ineffectual, that each country was to be considered as possessors of their respective conquests; and that if any such were to be given up on one side, it was to be only in exchange for such as had been made by the other. Upon these terms it is obvious, that the English were likely to be great gainers by a treaty, as they had taken several places and dominions from the French, and had lost only Minorca. Whether the French had a real desire to proceed upon such terms is uncertain; however, they soon gave the English ministry sufficient reasons to be dissatisfied with their proceedings. Mr. Pitt, who had for a long time been successfully actuated all the English measures and guided their councils,

councils, had ever disclaimed that pedantry of political refinement, of which others so vainly boasted; he negotiated therefore in a plain, simple manner; his guide, sincerity; and his only object, his country's good. Several points were agreed upon between each nation, that gave great hopes of an accommodation. The French agreed to give up all Canada, a fort upon the river Senegal in Africa, and to restore Minorca. The chief objects in debate were, the privilege they claimed of continuing to fish upon the Banks of Newfoundland, and of having the damages repaired which they sustained by the taking their shipping before a declaration of war. These two points were warmly negotiated on either side, not without hopes of speedy adjustment, when, unexpectedly, the whole treaty was, at once, set aside by the interposition of the Spanish minister, who desired to have the interests of Spain also included in the treaty. Mr. Pitt very justly considered, that as Spain had no part in the war, so it was impertinent in that power to intermeddle in a treaty of peace; and he regarded this interposition in its true light, namely, that of a confederacy between France and Spain mutually to support each other's interest. Confident therefore, of his own integrity, and, perhaps, also too much elated by popular applause, he began to treat the French negociator with a great share of haughtiness, of which he complained to his court at home; and he was soon recalled.

This conduct of Mr. Pitt might have justly incurred reproach, had he had no private intimations of a secret alliance between France and Spain. The last named power had actually entered into a family compact with France, by which they engaged to carry on a war in conjunction. Of all this the English secretary had been previously apprized, and proposed

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in the privy council to anticipate the designs of Spain by an immediate declaration of war against her. Vigour, dispatch, and resolution, characterized all the plans of this minister; he found, however, in the privy council, men who were willing to act with more deliberation, and who desired a certainty of offence before they demanded a reparation. Spain, they said, has yet given no certain proofs of their hostile intentions; and the English minister at the court of Madrid still continues to assure us of their pacific disposition. These remonstrances were answered by the secretary, but without producing the desired conviction; seeing himself therefore almost singular in his opinion, he was resolved to leave an assembly where he knew himself maligned; and threw up the direction of measures, which, to use his own expression, he was no longer allowed to guide. The council was, at that time, divided between two parties who were both equally pleased at his resignation. One part consisted of those who were at the head of affairs during the preceding reign; the other such as had been taken into favour in this; neither were displeased at the removal of a man whose popularity threw him into the shade, and whose vehemence controlled their moderation. But this popular minister's being removed, did not restore unanimity to the council. The parts which were held together by his presence, were now disunited, and a dissention began, which still continues to subsist.

The declaration of war with Spain, soon after, shewed how well-grounded Mr. Pitt's measures were, when he proposed a former rupture. However, the union of France and Spain, and the disunion of our own ministry at home, did not seem to retard the progress of our arms. The island of Martinico was conquered by Admiral Rodney and General Monck-

ton;

ton; the island of St. Lucia surrendered soon after to Captain Harvey; Granada was taken by Brigadier Walsh; and all the neutral islands submitted to the English dominion. But a bolder blow was struck against the Spaniards; a powerful fleet, and an army of fifteen thousand men, was sent against the Havannah, the key of all their possessions in South America. It made a noble resistance; but in the end was taken. And now the enemies of Great Britain were humbled on every side; the French left without trade or shipping; the source of Spanish opulence interrupted; nothing remained for them, but to ask for peace, upon such terms as we were pleased to grant. A negociation was accordingly once more begun between the three powers, by the intervention of the King of Sardinia's Ambassador; the Duke of Bedford was sent over to Paris, and the Duke De Nivernois came to London; and, at length, the definitive treaty was signed at Paris by the Duke of Bedford, the Duke De Praslin, and the Marquis De Grimaldi, and arrived in London February 19, 1763. In order to purchase peace the French gave up all Canada, their right to the neutral islands, the fort of Senegal, and their privilege of fishing on the coasts of Newfoundland and the gulph of St. Lawrence, but at a certain distance from shore. Spain also gave up, on her part, the extensive country of Florida, so that the English empire was thus greatly enlarged; and, if we compute its strength by the quantity of land included in its dominions, it can now boast more power than even the great Roman empire.

But no country should build upon remote strength; true power must always subsist at home. When the branches of a large empire become more powerful than the original stem, instead of assisting it's growth, they

they only overload and exhaust its nourishment. The discontents, therefore, which many have expressed at the conclusion of the late peace, that we did not insist upon harder terms, and increase our possessions, were ill founded, since it is probable we are already possessed of more than government can manage. There is ever a certain extent of empire which politics are able to wield; beyond this her magnificence is but empty pomp, and her size but sickly corpulence.



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